

THE  
**SOCIALIST  
STANDARD**

**1955**



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 605 Vol. 51 January, 1955

### THE END OF OLD AGE PENSION INSURANCE

### NOTES BY THE WAY

### 1984—UNTHINKABLE

### SHOULD WE DESPAIR?

### FIFTY YEARS AGO

### THE DISSIDENTS IN THE LABOUR PARTY

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Monthly

<sup>D</sup>  
4

## Little Gold Mines

### THE SHOPKEEPER TODAY

THIS WRITER ONCE WORKED in a butcher's shop in a back turning. It was a small, gloomy, stinking place, with a window of scrawny chops and unappetizing breakfast sausage. Sausages were something of a speciality, because next door was a bakery. Behind the counter two or three hindquarters hung like Tyburn corpses; below them—indeed, everywhere in the shop—lay congealed the fat-and-blood-droppings of decades, ineffectually smothered in sawdust, with the floor an unascertainable substratum. The writer worked from a quarter to seven till half-past six, except on early-closing days and Fridays and Saturdays, when it went on till nine or ten at night. For his services he was paid twenty-one shillings a week, plus an unpredictable small amount in tips from customers.

Sunday Evening Socialist Lectures at  
52 Clapham High Street

**DOCUMENTARY FILM "1848"**

for particulars please turn to page 7 . . .

The bad old days, of course. Nowadays shops close early, and everyone takes tiles and white overalls for granted. There are not nearly so many back-street shops. Town planning over the past 30 years has insisted on the separation of residential, business and shopping areas; the modern housing estate has all its shops packed in a neat little row without scope for competition. A good many small shops were closed by the war, with bombs and coupons; by Public Health Acts too, which finished the milk-from-the-churn dairies and the sale of hokey-pokey (no modern child has heard of, let alone tasted, it).

There are nearly a million shops in Britain, and something over half of them are the "family" type—that is, employ no paid assistants. A large number of these are businesses involving special duties—for example newsagents, with their early morning work, and second-hand shops, where the owners stand or fall by their own price assessments. There are, too, the shops which meet special needs and preserve special knowledge in families, like the Lancashire clog-shops.

Commonest of all small shops, however, is—or was—the little general store. Its gradual disappearance is a part of the change in town life that is taking place



before our eyes. Twenty years ago, even the smallest street had one. Often it was not a shop at all, only a front room with "Lyons' Tea" and "Nosegay" on the window. It sold sweets, hairpins, bottled coffee—anything cheap and handy—and it was always called, behind the proprietor's back, "a little gold mine." In most cases, it was nothing of the sort. Before the war, fewer than a third of the small shops in Britain made more than three pounds a week, and a good quarter of them made thirty shillings or less.

Where have all the little gold mines gone? "Full employment" is at least part of the answer. The shopkeepers who never saw thirty shillings a week had really no alternative when a million other people were unemployed. They were, to all intents and purposes, out of work themselves—probably getting a little less than the dole, but getting some of their food-wholesale to make up for it. At the first opportunity to put up the shutters and go to work, many of them did so.

The biggest, most obvious factor, however, is the growth of multiple stores. Marks and Spencer's, the Co-op and the rest have one supreme advantage which the small shopkeeper can neither share nor rival: they can—and do—buy in large quantity, and therefore more cheaply. That is why things really are a bit cheaper in Woolworth's (no good saying they're *not* the best: nothing bought by the working class is the *best*) and why people with not much money have to go there.

The multiple food stores have established traditions of cleanliness and hygiene, too, that have disaffected people from the small shops; or, to be more accurate, they have grown up with health education. Not too long ago you could see fish and bacon surrounded by flies and handled by 20 people before they were bought; nowadays they are guarded by fans and glass. Every large shop employs a porter to scrub, wipe and polish; some—Sainsbury's is one—inspect their employees' clothes, nails and haircuts. Incidentally, it is all a good economic proposition for the stores themselves. Apart from the actual attraction of a "nice" shop with gleaming tiles and glass fittings, maximum cleanliness means minimum waste—not to mention that the hygienic wrappings often go on the scales as well.

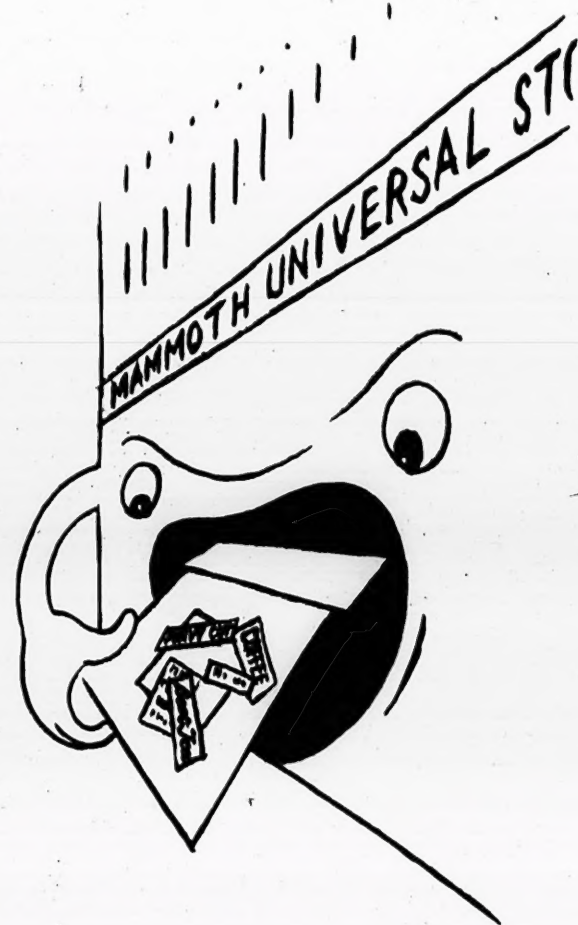
Against the advantages of shopping at big stores, small shopkeepers argue for the friendliness and personal attention to be had only in their establishments. Whatever reality the claim may have had is vanishing in the conditions of modern living. "Friendliness" means, of course, readiness to talk about everyone's health and local affairs. It is part of the pattern of life today that everyone must hurry, and part of the merit of the big stores that they give prompt service; a discursive shopkeeper, in fact, is more likely to be thought a hindrance than a friend of the family nowadays.

There seems hardly much point in, or even much scope for, personal attention. Time was when a great deal of food was sold loose. The grocers' shops had big, black, delicious-smelling canisters of tea, open sacks of brown sugar, prunes, peas and oatmeal, open earthenware bowls of meat paste—scores of things which bore no brand and could be tasted by prospective customers. The shopkeeper's recommendation may have carried weight in those days; it seems to have little purpose now, when everything is packaged, trade-marked and advertized in every paper.

Along with the small shops, the street markets are not

what they were. Nobody under 18 or so has seen a street market in its full glory—that is, on a Saturday night. In scores of High Streets women began their shopping at nine o'clock, and the butchers were auctioning their left-overs at half-past eleven. By the light of naked gas flares a hundred and one things were knocked down cheaply, with quack doctors and Salvation bands in the background. Public health, refrigeration, the demand for "prompt and efficient service," and road traffic as well, have all contributed to the elimination of the street market.

Retail trading today is more centralized. Most towns have their main shopping centres—in many cases constructed not many years ago—where Woolworth's, Boot's, Burton's, Marks and Spencer's and the rest dominate trade. In addition, one or two subsidiary centres on main roads,



and that's all. Nor do people go as often to the shops, in this different pattern. In the days of the little gold mines and the flourishing street markets, housewives popped out to buy this and that almost as they needed it; evidence nowadays suggests that they tend to concentrate their shopping into something like a weekly visit to the main centre and two or three visits to the subsidiary ones.

What is happening is simply part of the centralization of modern urban life. Look at a picture or an exhibition model of a "new town" or a "borough plan," with its disciplined rows of dwellings, its tidy, organized recreational, educational, business and shopping zones, and you are really looking at a trend which already is here. No doubt a good many people think this means improvement, in the same way as the Victorians thought anything new meant progress. Certainly the mass unemployment which maintained the front-room shops that didn't pay has gone; it can return at any time. Certainly, too, everybody admires the efficiency of the multiple stores; for does not

efficiency mean speed, and do we not hurry everywhere—half the time without knowing why—in this day and age?

Nobody yet has produced an effective plan for working people to buy much more of what is in the shops, however. The multiple grocers sell the same cheap stuff as the little gold mines, and plenty of people have not the money to buy much even of that. The real tragedy of the butcher's shop wasn't the sweating or the dirt; it was the little notes brought in by children to order their family's dinner—two ounces of ham with "cut thin" written in capital letters. The words might do for an epigram on working-class life.

Shops are the show-boosts of modern civilization. A walk down the High Street is a view of the abilities and the condition of man in our time. Imagination, experience and skill are there in profusion, to meet all man's real—and his fancied—needs. The needs are satisfied

only when he has the money. For thousands of years he has laboured to master nature, making barren soil fertile, reclaiming forest and marsh to make a world of plenty; the end of it all is baked beans and coffee with chicory.

Perhaps the strangest, craziest equation in all history is this one which dominates life in our time; money equals food, shelter, clothing, everything. We are so accustomed to thinking of it as the means to abundance that it all too seldom is seen in its real light as an obstacle to abundance. Free production and free access of everything are not curious schemes; they are fundamentals of social sanity. A few years ago a talented American cartoonist introduced the Schmoo (a delightful small animal) which could satisfy all of man's needs. His sermon in strips ended with a pointer to the horizon, and the words, and how true they are: "We've got the world—the biggest Schmoo of all!"

R. COSTER.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," January, 1905)

### Peace on Earth

While from thousands of pulpits Christian preachers are asking for "peace on earth, goodwill toward men" we find war between classes and war between nations everywhere manifest. If we take but a short period of ten years we shall find that every civilised country has been engaged either in war or in oppressing subject races. America with Spain and with the Philipinos; France in Madagascar and in Algeria; Russia with Japan and with the Manchus; Germany with the Hereros; Holland with the Javanese; Britain everywhere; thus the tale of war is told.

We who are Socialists are all in favour of peace, but at the same time we recognise that so long as men live in societies based upon class opposition, in societies in which the modes of producing the material sustenance of man are monopolised by a class, so long will war be rife as a means of satisfying national disputes.

The fact that one class monopolises all that is best in life because of its owning the means of production, while another class possesses nothing but its power of labour, has to sell that power in order to gain a mere livelihood, is the primary cause of the war of classes. Each class seeks to better its condition. And this is only possible at the expense of the other class. A rise in wages for the worker is a fall in the profits of the employer. A reduction of hours for the worker beyond certain limits is at the expense of the employer's surplus-value. This opposition between employer and employed manifests itself not only in the striving for better wages and reduced hours, but throughout the whole of the ramifications of modern industrial society.

Thus arising from the very course of commerce itself comes the necessity of carrying on wars of aggression. War to-day is essentially commercial, and at all times has been at base economic. Whether it is the ancient commercial feud of Athens and Aegina, the jealousy of Rome of its commercial rival, Carthage; the desire of Rome to conquer the lands adjoining the Mediterranean and thereby possess a monopoly of that sea which was

then the world's commercial highway; peasant wars, servile wars, feudal wars, or modern wars of aggression like the recent Boer War; whichever of these they be, they are fundamentally economic, and in the interests, not of the whole people, but of the ruling class.

Each of the forms of war—the outcome of the existing capitalist system—carries in its train results both dire and disastrous for the working people. Whether national or industrial warfare is the more distressing and far-reaching in its results may be difficult to determine from actual tabulated statistics, but after a minute examination of both we have no hesitation in saying that industrial warfare has far the greater number of victims.

Enormous as have been the victims of battles like Borodino, Sedan, or the Sha-ho; great as is the estimate of 2,000,000 men killed in battles between fairly civilised powers in the 25 years from 1855 to 1880, greater still has been the sacrifice to industrialism. Let us calculate the number of children dying in their first year from remediable causes, the number of accidents on the railway or in the mine, the early deaths of the workers from living in insanitary dwellings and working in insanitary factories and workshops with insufficient nourishment for their daily fare, and we shall see that the industrial warfare is as severe as the national. When we remember that the number of those killed and injured on American railways during the past year exceeded the 45,000 casualties of the Sha-ho battle we shall see that it is as necessary to consider means for the removal of the welfare of peace as of that of war.

By all means let us have peace, but let us work for it by trying to remove the cause of war—our present industrial system. When society is no longer a crystallised selfishness, when the condition of man's living is no longer at the expense of his neighbour, when anarchy is no longer the phase of production of commodities, when, instead of all these, men live, owning the material means of subsistence in common, and men and women can obtain the satisfaction of their needs without having to sell their



labour force for a bare subsistence, then it will no longer be necessary to speak of peace, for peace will then be a living reality.

Those who really desire that peace should reign over all the earth, who see peace between men as a condition of healthy industrial and social development should join with us of The Socialist Party of Great Britain in organising that party which shall preach those principles of industrial harmony based upon the abrogation of class privilege and the holding of all means of production and of distribution in common, which shall be the basis upon which shall be built up a peace which shall endure and which shall extend throughout the world-wide co-operative Commonwealth.

## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

**Ealing Branch.** The drive to sell the SOCIALIST STANDARD continues, in spite of difficulties here and there. Total sales during November were 32 dozen. Some of the older established readers are now asking for the pamphlets and this side of the campaign is going to receive more attention during the coming months. A member of Hampstead Branch came on one canvass to observe our methods and ended up by selling 11 copies on his own. It shows just what can be done if the spirit is there. What is needed is not special classes for canvassers, as some members have suggested, but just a keen desire to get on with some work for Socialism. The really interesting part is that some of the members who originally regarded canvassing as a duty now look forward to it and take pleasure in it.

The Branch Literature Committee have opened correspondence with Comrade Roddy in Vancouver, who is a keen and experienced canvasser. They hope to exchange ideas and discuss methods of canvassing which may prove of benefit to both parties.

The Branch's annual Xmas Party took place on 18th December, at the Royal Oak, Ealing Broadway, and as usual was very successful. The efforts of the Branch members to ensure a happy evening for all were well rewarded, as everyone had a most enjoyable time. Branch funds, it is hoped, will benefit by an even greater amount than last year.

The conducted tour of the Natural History Museum, organised by the branch, on Sunday afternoon, 21st November, was also a success, and there was an enjoyable social evening at a member's home afterwards. A further museum tour is being planned by the Branch Propaganda Committee for early in the New Year.

The alternate fortnightly lectures will be continuing up to the end of January, and tentative plans are being worked out for representatives of other organisations to address the Branch. Pressure of business in preparation for Annual Conference will probably not permit of many of these, however.

**Glasgow (City and Kelvingrove Branches)** report good progress with the indoor meetings and have arranged another debate with the Scottish Nationalist Congress.

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ing that party which shall preach those principles of industrial harmony based upon the abrogation of class privilege and the holding of all means of production and of distribution in common, which shall be the basis upon which shall be built up a peace which shall endure and which shall extend throughout the world-wide co-operative Commonwealth.

**The Overseas Secretary reports** that the Socialist Party of New Zealand has been making its voice heard amid the preparations for the General Election there. A series of meetings was held in Wellington, subjecting the competing parties—Labour, Social Credit, Russian Nationalist and the protagonists of a "National Government"—to Socialist analysis. The parties concerned were invited to defend themselves at the meetings, but all of them apparently thought discretion the better part of vote-catching.

Members and sympathisers in New Zealand have sent a £5 donation towards the cost of the recent 50th anniversary number of the SOCIALIST STANDARD. They think it was "a nice job."

Two old members have died recently, William Millett and James A. Childs. The latter, who was known in both New Zealand and Australia as "Farmer" Childs, was responsible for introducing Socialist literature to many remote corners of both countries in his travels in bush camps and gold camps. He was 70, and Comrade Millett was 50. Our sympathies go to their comrades and relations.

P. H.

## GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

### ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

## THE DISSIDENTS IN THE LABOUR PARTY

THE Labour Party has been having trouble with some of its members in Parliament and with the group who publish *Tribune*.

The issue in Parliament concerned seven Labour M.P.s who, in defiance of a decision of the Labour Parliamentary Party, voted on the issue of German re-armament, six of them voting "against" and one, Mr. John McGovern, voting "for"; the decision of the party had been that they were to refrain from voting. For this the Labour Parliamentary Whip was withdrawn from them so that, for the time being, though still members of the Labour Party, they are not regarded as Labour M.P.s. The other matter was a rebuke to the publishers of *Tribune* for their attacks on members of the Labour Party. Both matters concerned public actions and utterances and not the right to express views inside the Labour Party, which was not at issue.

On the first dispute Mr. Richard Crossman, Labour M.P., takes the view that the punishment was a mistake because it will prove a blessing to the victims.

"... the result of withdrawing the Whip will be to leave them free to force a decision whenever they like!"

"Mr. Silverman, Mr. Emrys Hughes and Mr. John McGovern are experienced enough political guerillas to know how they can use the freedom which has been imposed upon them. With their four colleagues they now form the third largest party in the House. This gives them the right to have a spokesman on every important occasion, and they would strictly be entitled to expel Mr. Clement Davies from the room allotted to the Liberal Party." (*Sunday Pictorial*, 28/11/54.)

But Mr. Crossman's assessment is only a short-term view. If the expulsion from the Labour Parliamentary Party becomes permanent the seven will, at the next election, lose the right to stand as official Labour Party candidates and with it will lose the invaluable backing of the Party machine.

Complaints about tyrannical denial of "freedom" in this connection seem to be particularly pointless. Wanting to get into Parliament with the backing of the Party machine these seven, like every other Labour candidate, "signs a solemn undertaking that he will abide by the Standing Orders of the Parliamentary Party." (*Daily Herald*, 24/11/54). This takes place in accordance with the Constitution of the Party, one clause of which is that no-one may be adopted as Labour candidate unless he "undertakes to accept to act in harmony with the Standing Orders of the Parliamentary Labour Party."

The Standing Orders themselves expressly recognise the right of an individual to refrain from carrying out a decision or voting, but only in the form that "on matters of deeply held personal conviction" he may "abstain from voting."

As the seven decided to vote in defiance of the Standing Orders they had expressly undertaken to observe the ground of any complaint on their part will remain obscure. If their attitude is that since giving the undertaking they have changed their minds they will be able to demonstrate this at the next election by refraining from seeking the backing of the Party machine to get them re-elected; though if they offer again to sign the necessary undertaking in order to get the backing they can hardly be surprised if the thought occurs that perhaps they will change their minds again.

*Tribune* is run by members associated with Mr. Bevan, but it is not an official Labour Party organ or under Party control. It describes itself as "Labour's Independent Weekly." It was rebuked by the Labour Party Executive, for an allegedly irresponsible and scurrilous attack on Mr. Deakin, on the ground that members of the Labour Party are required not to indulge in personal attacks on each other.

The editorial board of *Tribune* retorted that the principle of freedom of controversy was involved and they intended to tell the truth as they saw it. To which the Labour Executive wrote:—

"The issue at stake is not the freedom of the individual to write and speak as he thinks fit, but the question of how members of the Labour Party should act towards one another. Membership of the Labour Party carries duties no less than rights; it is a privilege involving the acceptance of certain standards of conduct." (*The Times*, 25/11/54.)

In an address on "In defence of politics," at Birkbeck College, but clearly with the disputes in mind, Mr. Gaitskell made some observations on the position of the individual inside British political parties. He said:—

"There was certainly a substantial freedom for individuals and groups within a party to have their say; it was limited only by the ordinary rules of good conduct towards colleagues. Those who broke those rules must expect some reaction; and if they did it persistently, flagrantly, without regard to the reputation and interests of the party, the reaction might be rather strong. Even majorities had their rights." (*The Times*, 3/12/54.)

This is, of course, the crux of the problem of voluntary organisations formed to promote some object on which the members are agreed and for which they wish to work in association. A voluntary organisation, controlled by its members, can only continue to function on a permanent basis if all, or at least the overwhelming number of members accept the democratic method that decisions shall be decided by majority and that minorities will abide by these decisions. To say that the majority must not decide what is the object they wish to promote and, having done so, to refuse to accept to membership those who have other objects, is to deny the possibility of forming organisations at all. The Labour Party found this with the Communists, who, while with one voice claiming the "right" to become affiliated, were saying through another frank, but tactless mouthpiece, that shaking the hand of the leader of the Labour Party was only to get the other hand nearer to his throat. Or to take another illustration, it would be like some enthusiast for alcohol claiming that it was a denial of his freedom not to let him join a teetotal organisation formed to combat the evils of drink. And this is not by any means far-fetched. Some of the Labour Party dissidents call themselves Pacifists and claim conscientious objection to producing armaments and supporting war. Yet they can square their claim that they regard this as an issue of first importance with their other claim to have the electoral backing of the Labour Party, which has supported every major war in its lifetime of half a century and is now committed to the great rearmament programme which it initiated while in office.

A special difficulty that does arise with an opportunist party like the Labour Party is that being loosely organised on a dual basis of individual members in local parties, together with the block affiliation of trade unions, and having no clearly defined objective, it is pos-



sible for the party's attitude of today on some issue to be the reverse of what it was in the past and for it to be reversed again in the future. As Mr. Gaitskell put it in the address already referred to,

"Sometimes the need to take into account the views of a minority, and to preserve party unity, caused a party to take decisions—especially in Opposition—which were obvious makeshifts, or evasions, and therefore brought the party into disrepute. This was regrettable but was to some extent inevitable in a two-party system."

In these circumstances it is not so unreasonable for those who oppose German re-armament in the Labour Party to believe that perhaps a majority of members also are opposed to it in spite of conference and other decisions.

There is one thing we may add out of our own experience in the S.P.G.B. While our organisation has always freely allowed opponents to state their case on our plat-

form the Labour Party does not recognise it as an obligation and allows it only occasionally and as the individual chairman or speaker may decide. Mr. Bevan and his group might therefore criticise their party for not following this democratic practice—but then his group also does not recognise the desirability of it as a principle for conducting propaganda.

In conclusion we may explain to any readers who do not know it already that as Socialists we have no responsibility for or concern with the Labour Party and the way its members choose to conduct their affairs beyond a certain interest as outsiders and opponents. The fate we wish the Labour Party is its disappearance as the workers become Socialists and consequently decide that they do not want labour parties.

H.

## SHOULD WE DESPAIR?

### Our Reply to the Pessimists

A CORRESPONDENT has written from abroad, a very pessimistic letter from one who looks upon the future with a jaundiced eye. He believes that a war is coming within the next decade which will reduce the world, certainly the Western world, to ruins. That, in face of the apathy of the workers, it is now too late to do anything about it.

Here is an extract from his letter:

"I think the European working class has let us and themselves down badly. The time for their 'historic mission' was in the decades after 1918, before the development of these gigantic forces of destruction which can, by completely destroying our resources and the culture reared on them, put paid to all our plans and hopes. Can you establish Socialism in a vast desert of ruins stretching from Rome to Dublin? And with big populations wiped out, and the more scattered communities in small towns and villages dying from the effects of radio-activity? With pestilence spreading, no one able to stem it? What we have hoped for always depended on order, development, tools to do the job with—what can you do with a mass of ruins and panic?"

In face of all this, he writes, the workers are apathetic and turn to the comfort of movies, football pools, and the like, and he cannot see the slightest sign that they are trying to find out what it is all about.

Let us take a look at the position of affairs and see if this pessimism rests upon solid ground, for the writer of the letter is not alone in his despair.

In the ancient world the destruction wrought by wars was appalling. No modern war has outstripped them in violence and disaster. The same can be said of the Napoleonic wars. The last two Great Wars, which covered a wider area and a denser population, were not relatively any worse—but the world still went on. At the beginning of the present century we were assured that armies and seaports would wither away before the power of the long distance cannon, the maxim gun and the dreadnought. At the beginning of the 1914 war, when the Zeppelin was added to the other horrors, people forecast the end of civilization—and then the aeroplane, the tank and gas came along to add to this conviction. When the second Great War commenced, with the bombing planes that Baldwin asserted would always get through, and everyone was supplied with gas masks and details of the horrible

effects of mustard gas, despair was wide-spread; to speak of an after-war period was regarded as idle optimism—but it came. Now it is the atom bomb that is the foundation of despair, but it is no more terrifying to the minds of people of today than the maxim gun and the mustard gas was to the minds of people long ago.

All wars are horrible things, and the outcome of sordid greed; they should spur those who understand to



activity, and not to spineless despair. If all the people in the last few decades, who threw up their hands in despair and retired, had kept their hands to the plough what a mighty movement for Socialism, and what a barricade against war, we would have had by now! The blame does not lie with apathetic workers, as the writer suggests, but with understanding shirkers, who saved their consciences by passing the buck.

The workers are not really apathetic, though there is a temporary mood of fatalism accompanied by uneasiness and uncritical railling against politicians and governments. In spite of the movies and the football, workers are worried and are trying to find answers to questions that per-

plex them; an attitude of despair will not help them to do so. In fact they are at the beginning of finding the answers by their feeling "What, another war to end war? That will finish us for good!" Even the cynical attitude is a change and a step in the right direction. It is for those who think like us to increase the power of our propaganda and to help them on from that point—not to run away. It is just because workers, including Labourites, don't want to experience another war that some of them fall a prey to the fake anti-war propaganda of the Communists and their fellow-travellers.

As far as this country is concerned the workers are not "tamely" submitting to be conscripted into the army. Boys of 18 are conscripted for short periods; many of them go unwillingly, and more of them are not proving amenable to discipline. They do not extend their period of service and their object is often, in harmony with government circulars that put the inviting prospect before them, to learn a trade that they could follow in civil life. The authorities are at their wits end to find means to keep the fighting services up to the required strength, in spite of increasing the pay and improving the conditions of service. The response to the call for volunteers, even for "civil defence," is farcical, whereas in 1914 volunteers rushed to join up.

Now to come to another aspect. If there is another world war will it be fought out with the new atomic bombs that spread destruction over huge areas? At first sight it seems obvious that it will, as all the powers are spending huge sums of money and frenzied efforts developing these means of mass destruction. But the answer to the question is not as simple as it appears.

The propertied, or capitalist, class as a whole requires a world of customers to whom to sell their products in order to realize the surplus value extracted from the workers' labour, out of which they become rich. This is also true of that section that grows rich out of the miseries of war. They are fully aware of the possibilities of atomic warfare with its promise of mutual destruction; they know that there will be no markets, and therefore no riches, in a completely devastated world. A certain amount of destruction they are prepared to put up with, like bad debts, but not total annihilation. The writer of the letter underestimates the possible effects of atomic warfare. He speaks of a desert of ruins from Dublin to Rome. He should have said from Spitzbergen to Cape Town and from San Francisco to Tokio, because, from his outlook, no section of the earth could escape the effects of radio-activity in such a war. However, the last war provided one instance of the fact that the Capitalist class is not prepared to take action that will completely remove the source of their riches as well as themselves. In the last war each side was well stocked up with gas and means to propagate disease amongst the people of the opposing side, yet neither gas nor microbes were used, although it was taken for granted, after the first war, that these would be two of the principal weapons. But the fact that both sides were well equipped with these weapons was the deterrent. Each knew that if one started the other was in a position to effectively retaliate. It was not any feeling for humanity, as witness the gas chambers and the devastation caused by aerial bombardment. It was the knowledge that to start would bring

mutual destruction.

When one power possesses a supreme weapon they can use it in "small" doses, like Hiroshima, but when they all possess the weapon its intimidatory power declines. The aim is to defeat the other side, if necessary, to utterly destroy its means of warfare, but not to utterly destroy its people. Thus each power must keep abreast of the means to prosecute warfare or its own section of the privileged class will be forced to take a back seat in the scramble for markets. Each government acts in the interests of its own section of the capitalist class and will shrink at nothing to further those interests. Mutual destruction, however, is not in the interest of any section. Even when one section has caused a considerable amount of destruction to another they are ultimately forced to help rebuild the defeated in order to ensure the continuance of markets for the disposal of goods. It is this latter fact that puts the prospect of total destruction out of the picture. Consequently, even at the worst, there is every reason for pushing forward the Socialist movement with as much energy as possible and no need for the despairing sentiment, expressed by a comment on the letter, "Let us be merry today for tomorrow we die." It may be added that the present concentration on small atomic weapons for the use of infantry and artillery is an indication of the way the wind is blowing.

Finally, is another World War necessarily imminent or inevitable? By no means. The powers that prey have already shown that they are not anxious to repeat the huge losses they recently sustained. But if the workers do not bestir themselves, and take a hand in the business of replacing Capitalism by Socialism, we are in for a long period of "little wars," cold wars, diplomatic skulduggery, and expanding means of destruction.

GILMAC.

### FILM SHOW

#### AT 52 CLAPHAM HIGH STREET

A T a Forum discussion group held at Head Office, films, radio and television were mentioned as being first class propaganda mediums. Although radio and television are, at present, quite beyond us, there are films that could be adapted for the use of Socialist propaganda. For instance, there is a documentary film entitled "1848." It was made in France and it tells the story of the 1848 Revolution through the contemporary prints of Daumier and other artists.

On Sunday, January 9th, at 8 p.m., we are showing this film at Head Office. A running Socialist commentary will be given by a Party Lecturer. There will be questions and discussion after.

It is possible that for some people combined visual and oral propaganda will make our message more effective than a mere lecture.

Films should help the Party propaganda to meet the challenge of the cinema, radio and television, and if this proves to be so, there is no reason why branches of the Party should not also make use of this method to attract larger audiences.

We need the support of members and sympathisers in this venture, as having other films in mind, your opinions of the propaganda use of this medium are essential.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JANUARY,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## THE END OF OLD AGE PENSION INSURANCE

It is common knowledge that each Parliament spends a good deal of its time tinkering with the unforeseen muddles resulting from the social reform legislation of previous Parliaments. It seems now that the elaborate scheme of social insurance, introduced by the Labour Government in 1948, has run its course and is on its way out, as regards the underlying principle of pensions to be paid for by contributions.

The *Economist* (11/12/54) has the following in an article on the future of pensions:—

"The starting point for any analysis must be the recognition that social insurance, as applied to old age pensions, is already dead; and that it has very little chance of coming alive again."

The point is that the Labour Government's scheme introduced in 1948, following much on the lines of the Beveridge Report, was supposed to be a financially sound scheme that would pay its way out of the contributions of employers and workers and the supplement paid by the Government. The Labour Government Minister of National Insurance, who introduced the scheme, the Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, M.P., was putting the official Labour Party point of view when he wrote, in 1948:—"It is, of course, essential that the scheme should be on a sound financial footing and the benefits it provides must, therefore, be paid for, in the main, out of the weekly contributions we all must make." (Foreword to *News-Chronicle Guide to the N.I. Act*, 1946, by David Owen.)

The Labour Party's view seems to have been that it

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD January, 1955

was desirable to have pensions covered primarily by contributions so that old age pensioners could be getting "their rights," something they had paid for, and not subject to a means test. Only a minority of "hard cases," outside the scope of the insurance scheme, were to come on National Assistance with its means test.

That was the idea; but it hasn't worked out as planned. Large numbers are dependent wholly or partly on National Assistance and instead of the National Insurance scheme being "outside of politics" each election sees the Government and Opposition using alterations of the scheme to catch votes. As the *Economist* points out in connection with the present increases:—

"How much politics has weighed in the decision, and how little human compassion, is demonstrated by the fact that the better-off pensioners get an increase of 7s. 6d. a week, while the poorest of them, those who are in real need, get an increase of only 2s. 6d. a week. There are three times as many voters in the former class as in the latter." (*Economist*, 11/12/54.)

So now it is reported (*D. Telegraph*, 14/12/54) that the Labour Party National Executive is considering the idea of talking old age pensions right out of the National Insurance scheme, the pensions to become openly and wholly paid for by the Government from the proceeds of taxation.

So the "sound financial footing" that the Labour Party held to be essential in 1948 can now be scrapped.

Not that it matters to the working class whether pensions are paid for wholly and directly by the Government, or via the cumbersome machinery of the Insurance Fund and individual contributions, or directly by the employers on a non-contributory basis as happens under the agreements operating in a number of industries in America. In trying to make ends meet from one week to the next what the workers look at is their "take home pay" after all deductions from it have been made. It is this that they compare with the prices and rents they have to pay, as also do the employers. And the workers have to struggle hard and continuously whether it be to raise their "take home pay" in face of rising costs of living or to resist a reduction of the former when the latter fall. One factor that may influence consideration of the proposal to scrap the contributory scheme as related in pensions is that it would enable the Government to dispense with many thousands of civil servants now employed on operating it.

## Corrections

1. On page 162 of the December, 1954, issue, column 2, line 12, the date should read 1939-45.
2. On the same page, foot of column 1, the sub-heading should read "Mutiny in King Street."

## ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL ISSUE

Copies of our 50th Anniversary Number may be obtained from Branches or Head Office.

Read about the formation of the S.P.G.B. and the work of the Party in the 50 years 1904-1954. Articles on the Russian Revolution, the Sterility of Labourism, and the Contribution of the S.P.G.B. to the Socialist Movement.

32 pages 4d. (Post free 5½d.)

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD January, 1955

## NOTES BY THE WAY

## Independence Day

Looking back on the Labour Government's term of office and the high hopes their supporters then had, one wonders how many of them still feel as they did at the time.

Labour Party headquarters were so worked up over it that they issued a leaflet in 1948 specially to celebrate "Independence Day—July 5, 1948" (the day on which the social security scheme came into force):

"July 5, 1948, sees . . . the inauguration of the social security scheme—a great and human plan worthy of a proud people."

"This mighty plan is one of the proudest achievements of British Socialism. It is another great step forward in the progress of the great Social Revolution which began in Britain in July, 1945."

## The Co-operatives and the Class Struggle

Some of the founders of the co-operative movement regarded it as a means of getting out of capitalism; but that idea has long been dead. Now the aim is to compete successfully with private traders and manufacturers at their own game, success being measured by profit and the amount of the dividend paid to members of the co-operative societies.

It is, therefore, not a matter for surprise that relationship between co-operative managements and their employees follow the normal capitalist pattern, including strikes on occasion. A recent demand by the Huddersfield society that closing time for certain departments on Saturday be six o'clock was rejected by the workers and their union and resulted in the union refusing to entrust the dispute to the chairman of the National Conciliation Board for the Co-operative Service.

The union's general secretary says that the management side of the Board refused a compromise proposal and took up the attitude "it was six o'clock or nothing." (*Manchester Guardian*, 13/12/54.)

The Co-operative management's view, expressed in *Co-operative Review* and quoted in the *Manchester Guardian*, is that the union's attitude is "not only a grievous blow to industrial peace but a setback to the hopes of collaboration between Co-operative societies and their employees in service to a common ideal." But what is the alleged common ideal? Long ago the president of the Co-operative society at Rochdale, which is the Mecca of the Co-operative movement, stated that "the co-operator today does not care a rap about co-operative ideals. He or she is simply concerned about cheap commodities." (*Co-operative News*, 18/8/1923.)

It used to be maintained that, generally speaking the workers in Co-operative societies were better paid than those in private shops but some doubt exists whether this is so now. A member of the management committee of the London Co-operative Society, Mr. H. J. Clayden, was reported as follows in the *Daily Worker* (20/4/53):—

"At one time a job at the Co-op was considered pretty good. . . . Before the war wages and conditions were, on the whole, better than in capitalist employment."

"But the situation has changed. Workers in corresponding capitalist concerns, especially distributive workers, are now better organised, and have made bigger advances than Co-op workers."

## The Investment of Church Funds

According to the *Daily Mail* (16/12/54) the Church Commissioners for England, who control and invest church funds, rank as "Britain's biggest investment trust," having £136,000,000 of Stock Exchange securities. They have recently been switching a considerable proportion into ordinary shares, thus aiming to get a larger return but with correspondingly increased risk of loss.

"Six years ago the Church Commissioners, on whose income from investments depends to a large extent the salaries of the clergy in this country, decided to aim at a higher return on their investments than could come from gilt-edged securities alone."

Since that decision was made, the Church Commissioners have been steady buyers of Ordinary shares.

Their last report showed that at September 30 they held £35,000,000 of equities."

## The Workers' Share of the National Income

The 91st edition of the Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1954, publishes a table showing the amount of wages and salaries and of profits, etc., compared with total personal income before and since the war.

As a percentage, wages and salaries, stood at 56% in 1938 and after the war rose gradually to 64.5% in 1951. In 1952 there was a slight fall to 64.2% and in 1953 to 63.8%.

Wages alone correspond to industrial workers and shop assistants, as distinct from clerical workers who make up the bulk of the salaries figures (up to 1952 shop assistants were reckoned in "salaries" but have now been graded under "wages" and the earlier figures have been revised accordingly). For wages the percentage in 1938 and 1946, was 38% rising to nearly 43% in 1951-3.

Rent, dividends and interest (which along with company dividends includes such items as Co-operative "divi" and interest on savings bank deposits) fell from 22% in 1938 to about 11% in 1946 and subsequent years up to 1953 though there are signs that this percentage may now be rising slightly, as the destruction due to the war has largely been made good.

The amount of rent, dividends and interest, is somewhat larger than it was in 1938 (£1,491 million against £1,130 million), but in the meantime, mostly owing to the increased price of everything, the total income is £13,584 million, compared with the much smaller figure of £5,048 million in 1938.

Farmers, "professional persons," and "sole traders and partnerships" are not included either in wages and salaries, or in the property income group, but are shown separately. The income of each of these three groups has more than doubled in amount since 1938, but farmers have done outstandingly well, with a rise from £71 million in 1938 to £397 million in 1953.

## A great Banknote Swindle

In the *People* (12/12/54), Mr. Francis Williams, sometime editor of the *Labour Daily Herald*, gave an account of the famous "Portuguese bank-note case," in



which some ingenious swindlers tricked the English firm that printed bank-notes for the Bank of Portugal, to print and hand over an additional £3,000,000 worth of Portuguese notes. It ultimately cost the firm £900,000 in damages.

Mr. Williams calls it "a confidence trick without parallel in banking history"; but here surely he is forgetting something on a much grander scale. What about the national savings campaigns that British and other Governments have been promoting during the past 15 years of continuously rising prices?

True, the nominal sum, plus the interest, is secure, but what about the steadily declining purchasing power of the nominal amount? Someone who put £100 into savings in 1939 will have had his interest and will get his £100 back; but, as an investment firm pointed out in an advertisement recently, £100 in 1939 would have bought a new motor car of a small, cheap model. Today £100's purchasing power is not much more than a third of what it was then.

Of course all governments say they are very sorry about this rise in prices but their sorrow does not extend to re-imbursing savers for what they have lost. And what is more a considerable slice of the fall in purchasing power of money arose directly out of the Labour Government's devaluation of the pound in 1949. This was a necessary consequence of devaluation and the Government of course knew that it was; as they could also have foreseen that it would leave wages lagging behind the rise of prices.

Two years earlier the Russian Government had put through a similar currency trick, though more crudely. In 1947 they suddenly announced that all existing notes, savings bonds, savings deposits, etc., were cancelled and must be replaced by new issues which alone would be legal. But of the notes the holder only received one new one for ten old ones, and of deposits in savings banks above 3,000 roubles (£143) between a third and a half was lost. Of money invested in State loan bonds the holders lost two-thirds. Naturally in these circumstances the Russian Government could announce that prices in the shops were being reduced, so that the savers who had been shorn of much of the results of their thrift could receive some consolation.

It is interesting to note that the above act of confiscation was carried out despite the official guarantee that "money put into the State Loan, is, of course, absolutely secure." (*Soviet News*, 16/5, 1946.)

The difference between the British and the Russian methods was that the former was a little more subtle. As Labour Cabinet Ministers, fresh from devaluing the pound which they knew would put up prices, were reiterating their determination to keep them down it was not until months had passed that workers became aware of the gradual price rise which reduced what their wages would buy.

In Russia, by contrast, the worker who handed in 100 roubles and received back only 10, knew at once what he had lost.

#### Who originated the National Health Service?

It was the Labour Government that introduced the National Health Service Act, in 1946, but the decision to do so had already been taken during the war by the Coali-

tion Government under Churchill. This was announced in 1944 in the White Paper "A National Health Service," presented by the then Conservative Minister of Health, Mr. Willink. But it made no claim to originality, saying,

"The idea of a full health and medical service for the whole population is not a completely new one, arising only as part of post-war reconstruction. In the long and continuous process by which this country has been steadily evolving its health services the stage has been reached, in the Government's view, at which the single comprehensive service for all should be regarded as the natural next development."

The "History of the Times" (Vol. IV, page 67), gives more information and puts the date much further back, with an account of a *Times* article in 1912:

"The next day (July 27th, 1912), Shadwell, who had done so much to bring medical affairs before the public, examined a proposal for a state medical service originated at a meeting of the British Medical Association at which it had received considerable support. Shadwell saw that if the idea were realised it would embrace the present Insurance Scheme which would be merged, so far as medical benefit was concerned, in a Universal Insurance System. The doctors would be paid out of public funds furnished by taxation, and the taxpayer would enjoy the services of a doctor whenever he wanted one. 'The plan,' *The Times* said, 'will commend itself to collective Socialists, with whom it has probably originated.' The arguments in support were fairly resumed from the point of view of both the medical profession and the public."

"The doctor would get rid of early struggles, uncertainty, anxiety, the labour of book-keeping, the loss from bad debts, the evils of professional competition, of too much and too little work. The patient, on his side, would be rid of the haunting fear of expense, and would not put off consulting the doctor until too late, as he often does now. The relations between the two, relieved of the embarrassing financial side, would be improved, and friction would occur less often."

Of course it was not "Socialists" who invented this Capitalist scheme for cheaply improving the working capacity of the wealth producers; probably the Fabians were the responsible party.

A speaker for the Fabian Society, Dr. Arnold Kloppe, spoke in Edinburgh recently on the Health Service. After reviewing the expansion of the service since its inauguration he added:—

"Nevertheless, this increase has barely kept pace with the rise in the dependent population (the very young and the very old) since 1948."

On the mental hospitals he said:—

"We no longer beat the patients and allowed the public in to see them for a fee, but otherwise, broadly speaking, our treatment had advanced little since the days of Bedlam." (*Forward*, Glasgow, 6/11/54.)

#### Churchill and the Boer War

The recent celebration of Churchill's 80th birthday has led commentators to present again the story of his life, including his brush with the Boers when he was acting as correspondent for the *Morning Post*, was captured and escaped. "Jack's Reference Book" (1920, page 95) gives the usual version in the statement "he was taken prisoner but cleverly managed to escape."

But Michael Davitt, Irish Nationalist M.P., who resigned from the House of Commons to go to the Transvaal as a gesture of protest against British Imperialism's aggression against the Boer Republic, would have none of this. In his "The Boer Fight for Freedom" (Funk and Wagnalls 1902, pages 244 and 245), he quotes from the editor of *The Standard and Digger's News*, who had declined

Churchill's offer to write an account of his exploits. An extract reads as follows:—

"Mr. Churchill is a very young man who has his way to make in the world and we would from our maturer experience, venture to suggest that it would be advisable to bear in mind the old adages, 'A still tongue makes a wise head,' 'Least said soonest mended.' And to demonstrate to our journalistic fledgling the true appreciation of his particular desire we would recommend that he alter the title of his lucubration to 'How I was allowed to escape from the Boers.'"

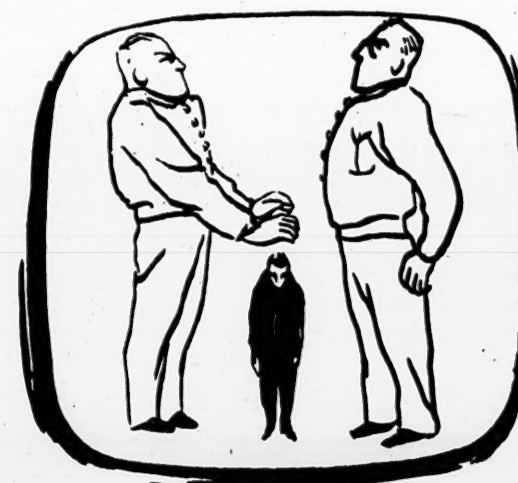
The Editor went on to explain that two hours after the Boer Government War Office at Pretoria had learned of Churchill's escape and issued instructions to the police to arrest him they received by post the instructions, already issued by the Boer Commandant, General Joubert, ordering Churchill's release as a non-combatant.

Of course it has to be remembered that the above account came from a source anxious to rob Churchill of

his claim to "glory," as was true also of the Conservatives who, when Churchill was their Liberal opponent, used to write down the Boer War incident.

Michael Davitt, in line with his Irish independence fight, viewed the Boer Republic through rosy-tinted "small oppressed nation" spectacles, and even if pressed on the question of the Boer treatment of the near-slave black population, would not have thought it particularly relevant. It is, however, somewhat of a mystery how the Labour and Liberal supporters of the Boers got over this embarrassing fact. The Boers of the early 19th century, who trekked into the Transvaal because, along with other grievances, they objected to British anti-slavery laws, left their traditions of treatment of the black population to the Boer Republic of 1900 and the Malanites of 1954.

H.



1984

—UNTHINKABLE?

LAST month an adaptation of George Orwell's famous novel, "Nineteen-Eighty-Four" appeared as a television play. The impact on audiences was generally agreed to have been startling—too startling, according to newspaper complaints about unsuitability and lack of "entertainment value." The intention of the author, however, was not to horrify people, but to make them think and reflect, and certainly the play must have succeeded to a large extent in doing just that.

The story is set in London of the future, which has become Airstrip One in Oceania, one of three States into which the world is divided. These states are permanently at war with each other, though the actual fighting takes place in remote parts, in the jungle or the desert. The social structure in Oceania is a hierarchy consisting of the Proles, the Outer Party and the Inner Party. At the bottom are the Proles, people doing purely routine work, ignorant, stupefied by abysmal and degrading conditions. Not very different are the Outer Party members, without privileges, living and working like automata, named and numbered on their clothing, rationed—and ceaselessly spied on by the two-way telescreen through which the Thought Police watch and rule.—By contrast, the Inner Party members are the privileged, the givers of orders, the only people with servants, with such luxuries as wine, and with freedom to switch off their tele-screens when they wish. Above all stands the figure of the leader, Big Brother. Whether he is a real person is immaterial—he is the "expression of the Party."

Against this background the story unfolds of one

humble member of the Outer Party, Winston (why Winston?) Smith, perhaps the last of the rebels. He is a pitiable, harassed, uncertain and confused rebel, working in the Ministry of Truth, where information is "adjusted" as the State requires. He watches a propaganda film showing the enemy leader, Goldstein; and while the others shout hate at Goldstein, he hesitantly thinks "I hate Big Brother." He meets a member of the Inner Party who, he suspects, "works for" Goldstein, and offers his services as a conspirator. Questions are asked: Is he willing to lie to further the cause he believes in, to cheat, to murder—even to throw sulphuric acid in a baby's face if it will somehow help? He is willing.

A romantic interest is introduced when Winston meets a girl whose job is to operate a novel-writing machine that churns out stereotyped rubbish for the Proles to read. Since love is forbidden and marriage is by order of the Party, the couple meet in secret, at first in the country and later in a room above an antique shop in the Prole sector. Eventually, the shopkeeper betrays them to the Thought Police. There is a scene (perhaps unnecessarily long and detailed) showing the brutal methods used to break down the last vestiges of their resistance, so that they unquestioningly accept that 2+2=5 if the Party says it is right.

The elements in the story that most compel attention are the subtle touches of detail that illustrate the sort of world that the author suggests is possible three decades hence. The worker in the Ministry of Truth helping to compile a dictionary of Newspeak (the new distorted



basic language) proudly claims that it will abolish shades of meaning and narrow the range of thought, that it will abolish ideas through the destruction of words to express them. This appalling outlook is seen in an Inner Party official's remark "We're not interested in the stupid crimes you've committed—only in the thought."

All the most detestable aspects of the world today are enlarged and caricatured; the slogans like "Ignorance Is Strength," "War Is Peace"; the Ministry of Plenty announcing ration reductions as increases, the Ministry of Peace proclaiming "another great victory over our enemies," the Ministry of Truth adjusting the facts of past history and "amending all records accordingly."

The newspaper critics of this television play generally assumed that it was to be taken as a warning against

totalitarianism as exemplified by Hitler's Germany and in Russia today. When he wrote the book in 1949, Orwell doubtless drew inspiration from the Nazi regime and "Big Brother" Stalin. Yet the warning is not really against the tendencies and conditions in one "bad" part of the world sully the "good." It is against the actual and potential denial of human qualities that is implicit in the world set-up today. The theme is a powerful condemnation of the whole system of privileged and subject classes, of governmental control to preserve the system by crushing out any opposing idea. More than anything, perhaps, it is a warning of the effect of the mass-production of ideas on those who lose the desire to think for themselves, and who leave everything to "Big Brother."

STAN.

## THE STUDEBAKER STORY

ON August 12 more than 5,000 workers of the Studebaker Corporation in South Bend, Indiana, voted to take a 14% wage cut, plus other reductions in their take-home pay. The story behind this vote is more than a story of the 20,000 Studebaker workers who ultimately will be involved. It is a story which pinpoints the post-war development of the automobile industry, the relations between the union, the United Automobile Workers (CIO) and the various automobile manufacturers, and, finally, the entire question of the role occupied and played by the unions within a capitalistic economy.

Why did this particular wage cut at Studebaker receive so much publicity in the newspapers, when just last April, the workers at Kaiser-Willys Motor Co. in Toledo took a 5-10% reduction in wages? First, Studebaker had always prided itself on its good relationships with its workers, of never having had a formal strike in 17 years of bargaining. It consistently placed ads in the newspapers showing several generations of workers working side by side in its plants, and boasted of its "Studebaker craftsmen." Yet, at the first meeting held August 5, the workers voted 3—2 against accepting any decrease in wages. More important than this, however, was the fact that the Studebaker workers had advanced their wages—through a piece work system—to an estimated 18-20% higher than the rest of the automobile workers, and now they were being asked to take a cut of almost this same amount.

To be sure, in order to show "equality of sacrifice," the corporation announced before the August 12 meeting that executive salaries would be cut as follows: 20% on from \$20-40,000 a year, 25% on from \$40-60,000, and 30% above \$60,000. Since before the reductions, Harold Vance, president, and Paul Hoffman, chairman of the board, were, for example, receiving \$145,833 and \$83,333 a year respectively, this reduction in executive pay can hardly be called equal with a more than 14% cut suffered by the workers on wages which at the time of the vote averaged \$35 a week.

### Company's Demand

The company presented these demands: elimination of the piece work system and establishing a regular hourly rate basis (a 14% reduction in pay), reducing the night shift bonus from a flat 10% for both shifts to 6% and

8% for the afternoon and midnight shift, respectively, reducing triple time for holidays to double time; and cutting washup and rest time from 43 minutes a shift to 27 minutes as in other plants.

In return the workers would be given a full union shop, an arbitration clause, improved vacation pay, and an increase from four to six weeks in the period during which the company would pay group insurance premiums during layoffs.\*

Although these latter concessions were called "substantial gains" by the union officials, they were really a means of sugar-coating the bitter pill of reduced wages which the workers had to swallow. What was at the essence was whether the workers could maintain their past gains—admittedly, excepting piece works, superior to those of other auto workers—in the face of Studebaker's threat to close down the plant unless these gains were relinquished. In short, could labour burst through the bonds of capital under a profit economy?

Indeed, according to its own reports, Studebaker was in bad shape. It claimed that it had been selling cars at a loss in the recent period in order to remain in business. After showing a profit of over \$2 million for the first six months of 1953, the company reported a loss of almost \$9 million for the same period this year, and that was after taking a tax credit of some \$10 million on additional losses.

*Automotive News* (August 23) reported that Studebaker's share of automobile sales fell from 2.92% in the first six months of 1953 to 1.7% in the same period of this year, or a loss of 1.22. Since in the auto industry, each tenth of one per cent. in sales is estimated to be worth about one million dollars, this loss of Studebaker's was serious.

The number of workers employed by the company dropped from 20,000 a year ago to about 10,000, and the work week from an average of more than 40 hours a week to 20 hours. Local 5 President Horvath announced that over 9,800 employees had exhausted their unemployment compensation. "Our members have averaged only two days a week since last February, and some of our people are losing what they've bought on the in-

\* *Business Week*, August 14th, p. 112.

stalment plan, so there's foreclosing on homes, repossession of cars, etc."\*\*\*

### Iron Claw

Slowly but surely the iron claw of capital descended on the Studebaker workers. At the meeting where the new reduction in pay was voted, reports the *Wall St. Journal* of August 13, "no vocal opposition was heard, and several men who said they had previously voted no, took their places at the five microphones to tell why they had changed minds." The 60-day notice to cancel the contract given by the Corporation to the union, the fear that Studebaker would move out of South Bend to Detroit, where Packard—with which Studebaker merged right after the workers voted the cut—was located—al this, and other factors, weighed heavily in favour of capital. The economic situation was against the workers. In the South Bend area unemployment had leaped from 6,700 a year ago to 18,300. Since Studebaker had announced beforehand that the plant would close in 60 days for the new model change-over, a strike—the workers' main defence against wage-cutting—would have been without effect.

Whether it was a bluff by Studebaker or not—some thought it was and wanted to call it—the point remains that in this case the workers were convinced their wages were too high for the company to remain in operation, and they took a cut rather than lose their jobs. *Thus does labour subordinate itself to capital, and thus does it give the lie to those "Socialists" who tell the workers that if only the unions will follow the correct policy—by having the correct leadership—they can bring the capitalists to their knees.*

These masquerade "Socialists"\*\*\* attack the present Reuther leadership of the UAW-CIO, and state that the solution to the Studebaker problem would be to bring the wages of the Big Three up to those of Studebaker, so that the latter will be able to compete with General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler. Not only does this show a sublime ignorance of the advantage big capitals have over smaller capitals, but also it raises the question as to why the workers in the Big Three do not rid themselves of their "wrong" leaders, and go on to a 20% wage raise? The point is that a few leaders do not hold the workers back. Their own conservatism, born out of their subordinate economic position to capital, especially in the present two-month changeover period for the new models—when in Michigan alone 300,000 will be walking the streets—indicates that they want the type of leadership they have at present. It is not a matter of leadership, but of economics, as to how far the unions can go under a profit system, and still continue it in operation.

### Old Man at Sea

Perhaps nothing reflects—and so sorrowfully, too—the subservience of those workers who accept the capitalist system, and are willing to undergo all its hardships than a statement made at the August 12 acceptance meeting by an "old-timer" among Studebaker workers. The *Wall St. Journal*, August 13, quotes him: "This is just like the man far out at sea and without a boat, without any food, and he can't swim, when suddenly he sees a tree floating by. Now that tree might be covered with poison

ivy and thorns, but I am going to grab it."

One of the strongest arguments used by the union leaders in urging the Studebaker workers to vote the wage reduction was the claim that even after the wage cut, their wages would still be higher in some cases than those of the workers of the Big Three. Also, the company stated in full page ads to the workers that it would use the pay reduction to lower the price of its cars, thus increasing sales, and furnishing steady employment and a greater take-home pay in the end.

Let us examine these arguments to show how hard-pressed Studebaker is to remain in the automobile business in the face of Big Three competition. One of the complaints of the Company was that it was not getting as much work from its workers as were the other auto manufacturers. In some departments workers reportedly turned out 20% less work. Now that the pay cut has been voted, Studebaker intends to step up work standards—the amount of work required for eight hours pay, although one Local 5 officer told the workers that management "expected no one to do more than a fair day's work."

In short, a reduction in hourly pay of more than 14% was voted, yet the Company intends to raise production standards. Assumedly, these standards will be raised above that production received when the workers were under a piece work system. As a result, as much, if not more, work will be produced with less pay for eight hours. The Company will increase that part of the working day going to the worker as wages. In this way a relative increase of profits over wages is sold to the workers as an increase in their take-home pay!

### A Phenomenon

Another phenomenon, which marks a new, or new form of development in the labour movement in this country, bows out of the Studebaker story. The so-called independent auto producers are threatened with their very existence. They have sought to solve these by mergers: hence American Motors (Hudson-Nash), Kaiser-Willys, and now Packard-Studebaker. Even these mergers may not be enough to maintain the Little 3 against the Big 3, which encroaches more and more on the independents. In the first half of 1953, General Motors, Ford and Chrysler took 88.83% of the car market, but in the first six months of this year this total soared to 94.34%, leaving little more than 5% for the independents. Even if, as the *Militant* suggests, wages in the Big Three had been raised to the level of Studebaker before the cut, or even now that Studebaker wages are also to the level of the Big Three, this does not mean the independents can compete on an even keel with the Big Three. It takes capital, tremendous capital, to instal labour saving machines, automation, and to tool up for new models. Ralph Watts, *Detroit News* automotive writer, states (August 20) that the "independents on a volume of 5% would continue to operate on an unprofitable basis." The bigger the capital, the more it can take advantage of the savings of mass production.

### Lower the Costs

The independents will have to lower costs—and this means the costs of labour—even more so than the Big Three to offset the tremendous capital advantages of the latter. One way to do this is to cut wages outright or,

\*\* *Wall Street Journal*, August 3rd, p. 2.

\*\*\* See, "The Studebaker Plan Spreads," *Militant*, August 23rd, p. 3, organ of Trotskyist, Socialist Workers' Party.



instead, to intensify the productiveness of each worker so that he produces more. This will be done at Studebaker in the future. The Nash division of American Motors has stated it will ask the UAW Local in Kenosha, Wisconsin, not to take a wage cut, but to change "work standards"—in short, to increase productiveness per worker. Mike Maxin, vice-president of Nash Local 72, stated that "we realize the independents have a problem . . . if the firm shows us contract provisions that are costing it more than other auto makers have to pay, we will probably make concessions."\*\*\*\*

Finally, the August 9 issue of *Automotive News* reports that in Toledo Richard Gosser, UAW vice-president, announced that a 12-man committee will be named to work out methods of increasing the efficiency and competitive position at Willys Motor. Packard is also rumoured by the same publication to be ready to ask the union for contract changes along the lines of altering work methods.

The workers of the independents will be competing against each other, the workers of all independents will be seeking ways and means to out-produce the workers of

\*\*\*\* *Automotive News*, August 23rd, p.2.

## DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

MANY workers have weird and wonderful ideas about doctors. In some a childlike faith in the doctor's healing powers is matched only by the belief that he belongs to a class immeasurably above their own. And many even of those who pour scorn upon the "quack," as they choose to call him, still hold firm to the delusion that he belongs to the ranks of the wealthy.

The truth is, nevertheless, that the great majority of doctors belong to the working-class. Like bricklayers, clerks, lorry drivers, and the rest, they have to get a job to get a living. They come out from their medical schools, like sausages from the machine, and then begins for most of them the long and weary search for employment. It does not matter in the least that most of their eventual jobs are now in the hands of the State; nor that their masters choose to call them "appointments"; nor that they work for a salary and not for wages. Call it a job, or an appointment, the important thing for a doctor, as for every worker, is to find one.

The trouble for the doctors is that whilst in these days of full employment bricklayers, clerks, and lorry drivers, are finding jobs easy to get, they are complaining about how hard it is to get one.

"Every year," says Dean, of Postgraduate Medical Studies, in the *Medical School Gazette*, of Manchester University, "several hundred more men and women be-

the Big Three, and the workers of the Big Three will be fighting each other and the independents also. The union which was set up to eliminate competition among workers becomes an instrument for stimulating it. The union which was organized to prevent the encroachment of capital on the workers becomes the means to assist one capital to encroach on another.

### Limit to Unions

The Studebaker story proves the Socialist contention that there is a limit as to how far the unions can go under capitalism. This lesson will be brought home to the workers even more in the coming period when, according to *Detroit News* writer Ralph Watts, "the auto industry is preparing for the stiffest competitive battle it has ever known."

When the workers learn the final lesson, that the unions and their limited struggle against the profit system is no solution to their basic problems, then they will be in a position to eliminate once and for all a system which pits worker against worker while the capitalists run off with the booty.

KARL FREDERICK.

(Reproduced from *Western Socialist*, September-October, 1954.)

come doctors than there are jobs for; if the medical schools continue to take in their present numbers of students, there may easily be 5,000 to 6,000 surplus doctors by 1959."

And he goes on to say:—

"The numbers on the Medical Register have increased since 1933 from just below 60,000 to above 80,000—an alarming prospect."

In the higher ranges, the problem is no better and is probably worse. "Recently," says the *Gazette*, "there were more than 60 applicants for an appointment as a surgeon to a regional hospital." At least 40 of these men were capable of doing the job and doing it well, and the Dean asks the question:—

"What prospect is there for these men, since there is little likelihood of more consultant posts being created in the near future?"

The question gives its own answer—there is no prospect. Like the rest of the workers, they will have to take their chance, living as best they can on what they have been lucky enough to get.

One thing only we would ask. Spare us any further homilies about what superior people they are. Let them realise, in other words, that they are workers trying to get by under Capitalism, like the rest of us.

S. H.

**BLOOMSBURY LECTURES**  
Sundays at 7.30 p.m.  
at  
**THE FORUM CLUB,**  
33, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Rd.  
Jan. 23rd. "1984—FUTURE OR PHANTASY?"—  
R. COSTER.  
Jan. 30th. "MARXISM"—GILMAC.

**KINGSTON BRANCH LECTURES**  
at  
Kingston Trades & Labour Club,  
9 Grange Road, Kingston.  
Thurs. Jan. 6th. "EDUCATION & SOCIETY."—  
R. COSTER.  
" " 20th. "WILLIAM MORRIS, ART &  
SOCIALISM."—E. KERSLEY.

### HACKNEY BRANCH LECTURES

CO-OP HALL, 197 MARE STREET,  
alternate Mondays in January at 8 p.m.

Jan. 3rd. "SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF INDUSTRY."—  
J. C. ROWAN.  
Jan. 17th. "THE REVOLUTION IN CHINA."—F. OFFORD.  
Jan. 31st. "SOCIETY AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLU-  
TION."—E. KERSLEY.

### DARTFORD BRANCH DISCUSSIONS

at  
**LABOUR CLUB, LOWFIELD STREET, DARTFORD**  
Meetings Commence at 8 p.m.

Fri. Jan. 14th. "CYNICISM"—GILMAC.  
" Feb. 11th. "SOME ASPECTS OF CRISES."—E.  
HARDY.  
QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION. ALL WELCOME.

### SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at  
**52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET**  
(Clapham North or Clapham Common Tube Stns.)

A series of regular Sunday evening lectures will be held  
at Head Office throughout the winter. Commencing  
each Sunday at 8 p.m.

Jan. 2nd. SOCIALISM AND THE COLOUR PROBLEM.—  
S. CASH.  
" 9th. DOCUMENTARY FILM "1848."—E. KERSLEY  
& H. YOUNG.  
" 16th. THE RUSSIAN ENIGMA.—H. JARVIS.  
" 23rd. EDUCATION AND SOCIETY.—R. COSTER.  
" 30th. THE MENACE OF AFRICA.—C. MAY.  
Feb. 6th. THE ECONOMICS OF HEALTH.—H. JARVIS.

### HACKNEY LECTURE

at  
**CO-OP HALL, 197, MARE STREET, HACKNEY**  
on  
Monday, 10th January at 8 p.m.  
"AN ANALYSIS OF PRESENT-DAY CAPITALISM"  
—E. WILMOTT.

**DEBATE WITH SCOTTISH NATIONAL CONGRESS**  
in  
Door D, CENTRAL HALLS, BATH STREET, GLASGOW  
on  
on Sunday, 16th January at 7.30 p.m.  
(Doors open at 7 p.m.)

Subject: "IS SCOTTISH NATIONALISM OPPOSED TO  
SOCIALISM?"  
Speakers: For S.P.G.B.—T. MULHERON.  
For S.N.C.—OLIVER BROWN, M.A.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

### SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

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## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL**.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP**.—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupar's Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, 1b, Benzie Road, Dundee.

**HOUNSLOW**.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

**MANCHESTER**.—Group meets Wednesdays 5th and 19th January, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

**ROMFORD**.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

**RUGBY**.—Group meets alternate Mondays 3rd and 17th January, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

**WATFORD**.—Group meets alternate Thursdays 6th and 20th December at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Road, (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

**GLASGOW MEETINGS**  
(City and Kelvingrove Branches)  
at  
**CENTRAL HALLS, BATH STREET**  
Sundays at 7.30 p.m.  
(Doors open at 7 p.m.)

Jan. 23rd. "THE SCOURGE OF THE SWASTIKA"—  
J. RICHMOND.  
" 30th. "ECONOMICS OF SOCIALISM"—J. HIGGINS.  
Feb. 6th. "OUR PRINCIPLES AND POLICY"—  
R. NORRIE.

**PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS**  
**PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2**  
Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

**LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS**  
Mondays: Finsbury Square.  
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.  
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.  
Thursdays: Tower Hill.  
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

**SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.**  
Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist  
Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee  
at the Head Office or to a local branch.

**BOREHAM WOOD**  
Will members and sympathisers willing to  
cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood  
contact:  
I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,  
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD January, 1955

## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley, Birmingham.

**BLOOMSBURY**. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m., 6th and 20th January.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT**. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON**. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15.

**CROYDON** meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: H. J. Wilson, 7, Cyril Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel.: Bexleyheath 1950.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6., (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.). Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

**GLASGOW (City)** meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW (Kelvingrove)** meets alternate Mondays, 10th and 24th January, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Farmer, 46, Fernie Street, Glasgow, N.W.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road Met. Stn.). Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware, Middlesex.

**HIGH WYCOMBE** Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. L. H. Courtney, 53, Canonbury Park South, Islington, N.1.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 11th and 25th January, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**ST. PANCRAS** meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o Head Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**WIMBORNE** Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Market Drive, Merton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 606 Vol. 51 February, 1955

### FIFTY YEARS PROGRESS

### THE TRAGEDY OF THE RAILWAYMEN

### THE PASSING SHOW

### JAPAN IN TROUBLE

### FIFTY YEARS AGO

### THE HORRORS

Registered for transmission to  
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

4<sup>D</sup>

## Looking at Football

### SPORT FOR PROFIT

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO, seven countrymen from Ryslippe were indicted for playing "a certain unlawful game called foote-ball, by means of which unlawful game there was amongst them a great affray, likely to result in homicides or serious accidents." Today the "unlawful game" is a huge branch of the entertainments industry; more, it is part of the social life of Britain. And, as a touch of irony to make the seven men turn in their graves, the Queen goes to watch the Cup Final not seven miles from Ruislip.

Every Saturday about a million people go to see League football—nearly enough a thousand watchers to every player. The cry that we are all onlookers today is not quite fair, however. For one thing, playing football requires agility, keen senses and good stamina—is, in short, a young men's occupation. For another, facilities for it are increasingly limited. Land is valuable, and several acres can accommodate only two or three football pitches. In fact, almost every male adult has played football at some time, and most would probably rather play than watch; as it is, only a minority *can* do so.

To say that football is big business is not to say that every professional club is a thriving concern. A good many of them are companies which have never paid a dividend, financed mainly by local business men who want a hobby, and like to be in the public eye. The big clubs however—Arsenal, the Spurs, Newcastle and the rest—are each as profitable as a chain of cinemas, and their methods have changed the game itself. There is no need to consider the pools much in relation to football. Merely the bigger, better successors to prize crosswords and "Bullets", they have little influence on the game; as much money would be wagered on cock-roach races if the rewards were big enough.

This is the age of professionalism in sport. It is a quite recent development: within living memory, the F.A. Cup was won by an Old Etonian side. The nineteenth-century sportsman was an amateur in its ideal sense, a well-to-do man who played football or cricket for recreation and because he had been taught to do so. The public schools fostered football (in various forms) to help develop the character of empire-builders, in line with what Wellington said about the playing fields of Eton. And the professional, eighty years ago, was a lowly man indeed who drank beer and touched his forelock to the gentlemen.

Ordinary people had played football long before there were public schools, however. For three centuries, their rulers tried to stop them; there were half a dozen statutes against football in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the kings and preachers railed against it still in the seventeenth. It was certainly a





rough affair. There were no rules; whole villages, sometimes whole districts, played against one another, and the rough-and-tumble fights were not much related to the ball's progress. Philip Stubbes minced no words in "The Anatomie of Abuses:

"As concerning football playing, I protest unto you that it may rather be called a frendlie kind of fyghte than a play or recreation—a bloody and murdering practice than a felowly sport or pastime. For dooth not everyone lye in waight for his adversarie, seeking to overthrow him and picke him on his nose . . . ?"

What concerned the ruling class was not the folly of it or the broken heads, but its distraction from military exercise. It interfered with quarterstaff and archery practice; that called for legal action.

The first universal rules for football were an attempt to compromise between the various codes and make competition possible. Cambridge, the public schools and the old boys' clubs proposed model rules, but there was little unanimity until the Football Association was formed in 1863—at the same time establishing the distinction between "Rugby" and "Soccer". Once competition was on its feet, professionalism was the inevitable outcome. Watching competitive games became a popular recreation in the northern industrial towns, and success-hungry teams used the obvious means to get good players to join them. In 1885 professionalism was recognized; in a few years football meant Preston, Blackburn and Sheffield instead of the Wanderers, Royal Engineers and Carthusians.

One of the first things professionalism did to football was make it less violent. Injury meant nothing worse to the amateurs than an interruption of their favourite game; to a professional it could mean displacement and loss of livelihood, and so heavy charging was outlawed. The style of play changed, too. The old amateur forwards could juggle delightfully with the ball, but a paid team wanted only the quickest way to goal. Individualism declined and "combination play" became the thing: a famous back, writing in 1906, complained that modern forwards passed the ball before they could be tackled.

The biggest changes were still to come. However skilful its play, a losing team has few followers—that is,

its income falls. The huge partisan crowds at football matches in the 'twenties were prepared to see only their own sides win, and applaud any sort of play to that end. The Arsenal introduced the "stopper" centre-half, a player whose business was to obstruct the opponents and nothing else. The method caught on because it was successful; it still dominates football. The units in the pattern of today's team are the tough, destructive centre-half, the fast-chasing wingers and the hard-kicking, opportunistic centre-forward.

Meanwhile ball play, the real craftsmanship of football, has declined. The mechanization of leisure and the increasing congestion of towns have had a lot to do with it. Thirty or more years ago, boys spent half their spare time kicking small balls in the streets or on waste ground; now they watch the Telly instead, and in any case there is less waste ground and they have been taught that playing in the streets is dangerous. Then, too, the young model themselves on the professionals.

Britain has always been regarded (by Britain as well as the others) as the world's schoolmaster in football. Since the war, half a dozen other nations have produced teams which have beaten Britain's best and started every one asking what has happened to football in this country. Hungary, Uruguay, Yugoslavia and the other nations have the best of both the old and the new football worlds; ardent for personal skill, their players have learned besides the most useful elements of commercialized English football. It is true that nationalism plays a considerable part. Rapidly developing countries (like those mentioned) are hungry for every sort of prestige, and sporting success can carry a great deal of it. That is why the governments of Russia and the satellite nations spend large sums on sports facilities and give great honour to their leading footballers and athletes. International sport, commonly believed to promote goodwill more often contributes to its opposite.

In recent times there has been strong criticism of the transfer system. Fifty years ago a player named Common was sold for a thousand pounds, and the football world shook (indeed, the F.A. tried and failed by legislation to prevent any more of it); a few weeks ago a player was bought for thirty thousand. A great deal of nonsense is talked about footballers being slaves; they are no more so than any other wage-slaves. Most transfers take place at the players' wishes, and the only time a player is victimized is when the club asks a fee for him that nobody will pay; the legal validity of the transfer system, incidentally, was established in 1912 when a player named Kingaby sued Aston Villa in exactly those circumstances. Players themselves receive no share of transfer fees, though a sought-after man usually looks for such inducements as a house and a side-line job. The worst aspect of the transfer system is that it tends to produce a monopoly of talent by the wealthy clubs, emphasizing again the business character of modern football.

A footballer's maximum wage is fifteen pounds a week in the playing season (many clubs pay nothing like the maximum). Players receive bonuses of two pounds for a win and one pound for a draw, and a few of them are famous enough to make a little more by writing newspaper columns or advertizing. Thus, a first-class player is lucky if he takes £700 in a year. Certainly his earnings are not to be compared with a jockey's, and his playing career usually ends before he is thirty-five (though every footballer understates his age). A small number become

managers, coaches and so on, but obviously there is not room for more than a few to do so.

Football combines some of the best things games can offer—physical exercise, skill, co-operation with others. Commercialism has shaped it along certain lines, making success more important than enjoyment. Watching it played well can give as much pleasure as a ballet or a symphony. More often, however, it is a weekly relief from tedium or a source of vicarious satisfactions ranging from dreams of fame to revenge fantasies. Nor can too much be said for commercial football from the players' point of view. It would be wrong to suppose they do

not enjoy it (even the ones who say they play just for money). All the same, it is their bread and butter, and only the exceptionally skilful players can afford not to help the fair means with some of the other sort (so you can see the same nasty little tricks aped in schoolboy games, too). A professional footballer has several years with play instead of work and a great deal of adulation, and afterwards he is turned into a workaday world almost completely unprepared for it.

It seems a pity that a good sport should be tarnished by the profit system. But then, what isn't?

R. COSTER.

## FIFTY YEARS PROGRESS

### Capitalism's Failure to Produce

**A** DELUSION that dies hard is the belief that plenty of everything is actually produced in the world, only needing to be properly distributed. This idea was being put forward over a century ago. It was encouraged by the increases of output due to machine production; by the obvious contrast between rich and poor; and by the periodical trade depressions in which the inability to sell what had been produced seemed to indicate that production had been greater than peoples needs.

The appearances, however, were very misleading and many people were, and still are, misled.

The seemingly very great increase of output when a machine replaces a number of men, can, and usually does, look very different when account is taken of the number of men required for the manufacture, operation and maintenance, of the machine, showing itself in the enormous increase that has taken place in the number of workers in the engineering and allied trades. When account is taken of all the factors the overall increase of productivity is found to be very small. An industry able to show a continuous increase, year after year, of say 2 per cent. or 3 per cent. in output per man would be doing well. In some industries productivity falls not rises.

The surpluses of goods during a crisis do not mean that more has been produced than mankind needs but only that there is more on sale than the buyers will take; what they will take being limited for the great majority by their lack of money.

Marx, who was not taken in by the delusion we are discussing, quite rightly pointed out that capitalism does not produce enough for human needs.

Some eighty years ago Marx wrote:—

"It is not a fact that too many necessities of life are produced in proportion to the existing population. The reverse is true. Not enough is produced to satisfy the wants of the great mass decently and humanly."

(*Capital*, Vol. III, p. 302.)

That was true then and it is true now.

If we take British capitalism as an example we can sum up the developments of the 50 years since the formation of the S.P.G.B. in a few simple propositions. Writing about the year 1904, in his book "Riches and Poverty," the late Chiozza Money showed in detail the outstanding features of British life. They were that production was at a miserably inadequate level in relation to the needs of the population; that much of the product was trashy; and that out of what was produced the rich minority drew an amount quite out of proportion to their numbers.

There are people who will acknowledge the truth of Chiozza Money's indictment of the capitalism of 1904, but who imagine that there has been some vast change since then. Of course, if they commit the elementary error of dealing with monetary amounts without allowing for the fall in what money will buy, they can get all sorts of fanciful pictures. On that basis they can say that the national income and national production, and also wages, are some six or seven times greater than in 1904.

But if they come down to earth and look at real values they will find that the national income and national product have increased since 1904 only by something in the region of 70 per cent. or 80 per cent.

(Estimates of growth of national income are reproduced in "Economic Development in U.K. 1850-1950," published by American Mutual Security Agency to U.K. See also Colin Clark's estimates in Review of Economic Progress Queensland, July-August, 1951).

But this increase has first to be adjusted to the larger number of people it covers, the population of the United Kingdom having increased from 40 million to 50 million. This cuts down the increase of the national income to an increase per head of the population of about 40 per cent. since 1904.

This increase of production has taken place partly through a small continuing increase of output per worker, partly through the absorption of most of the unemployed, and, finally, through the fact that a larger proportion of the population are now normally out at work in offices and industry instead of being at home (notably more married women).

We are then left with an increase in the national income per head of the population of about 40 per cent. in the half century since 1904. But let it not be imagined that this means there is available 40 per cent. more articles of everyday consumption. By no means. The national income, national production, and the Index of Production published regularly by the Government, all include, not only such items as additional factories, school buildings, Government offices, etc., but also armaments; this last item being particularly worth looking at. In 1904, expenditure on the army and navy was about £66 million, equivalent to less than 4 per cent. of the total national income. In recent years it has exceeded 10 per cent. of the national income, amounting in 1953-4 to nearly £1,400 millions. This is peace-time expenditure. During the two world wars it has been four or five times as great and for the whole half century has averaged over 15 per cent. of the



national income, totalling upwards of £40,000 million and leaving that much less in the form of articles of consumption. If, to this, we add the destruction resulting from the big and little wars of the half century, it is beyond doubt that the great bulk of the not very large increase of production and productivity per man that has taken place since 1904 has been swallowed up in British capitalism's armaments and wars.

If, in the meantime, the workers' average earnings have, through their struggles on the industrial field increased more than the increase of their cost of living, and their hours of work are less than in 1904, these changes, too, must have set against them the more intensified work that is expected in the shorter working day, together with the fact that for many millions of workers the shorter time spent in the factory has been offset by the longer time spent uncomfortably travelling to and from work, because houses have been built further away from places of employment.

And though real wages are for many groups of workers higher than in 1904, only the very superficial observer can be deceived into thinking that poverty has been abolished. With a present cost of living about 2½ times what it was in 1938 what kind of life is given by the adult average earnings (before deduction of tax and insurance) of 197/8 a week on which to bring up a family? or by the woman's average of 105/3? The railwaymen are just celebrating the raising of their wages, but the new rate for 60,000 porters and others will be, in London, 134/-, rising to 136/- after one year and to 138/- after two years. Provincial rates are 3/- less. Is this the abolition of poverty?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer disclosed in answer to a question (Hansard 16/11/54) that in 1953, out of 23 million male and female workers, only one in five has more than about £9 a week after deducting tax and insur-

ance; and that there are 8,600,000 whose net income is under 96/- a week. Millions of pensioners are worse off still. Apart from the present low level of unemployment British capitalism of 1955 is much like that of 1904 for the workers. It is very like it too in respect of housing, for in 1904 the Government and the reformist parties were telling each other that they really must do something to solve the housing problem. They still are. The recent record rate of building is probably within reach of catching up the additional needs created by the war. But now, says Mr. Duncan Sandys, Minister of Housing and Local Government, "they must waste no time getting down to the job of slum clearance." (Speech at Birmingham, *Manchester Guardian*, 12/1/55.)

"We think there may be about a million slum houses. If this figure proves correct, I suggest that we should aim at breaking the back of the problem in most areas within ten years."

But still another housing problem is looming up, "the modernisation of older houses."

"Over one-third of the houses all over the country were built in the nineteenth century or earlier, and in the interests of all concerned they should be brought up to date."

For many workers it is only by living in cramped accommodation in these slums and old, sub-standard houses, at low rents, that money can be found for modest expenditure on entertainment, holidays, drink and tobacco.

Which brings us back to where we came in, for Chiozza Money 50 years ago was writing about overcrowding, back-to-back houses, ill-effects on health, etc., etc., and of the need to do something about the housing problem. We have all these housing evils with us still.

The more capitalism changes the more it remains the same.

H.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," February, 1905)

### A Plain Statement

THE private ownership of the means of life . . . is the cause of the miserable condition of the life of the workers. The remedy is, and can only be, the abolition of such private ownership and the substitution of ownership and control by the whole people.

That is a drastic change. Your Tory and Liberal politicians will tell you that the change can never be wrought.

They will also talk about the injustice of taking away from the people who own them, the land and machinery, etc., which they say are theirs. The injustice of taking away from them the power to live upon the labour of others! The wrongfulness of taking away from them for the benefit of the whole people the things they have taken from the whole people for their own individual benefit!

Pay no attention to the Liberals and Tories. They want the basis of the present arrangement to remain as it is. They may under some circumstances agree to make some alteration that will affect some of the results of the arrangement. But it is the basis that is wrong.

Can the workers effect the change? We answer yes. Just so soon as they grip the Socialist position; just so soon as they thoroughly understand the real cause of their

misery and the only remedy, they can effect the change.

But not a moment before then. What does the understanding of the Socialist position involve? Please try to follow us closely here because it is just here that we part company with the other bodies claiming to be Socialist.

An understanding of the Socialist position involves a recognition of the fact that the interests of those who own and control the means of life (the capitalist class) are absolutely opposed to the interests of those who own nothing but their power to work (the working-class). The first are concerned to make a profit out of the labour of the second. The second are battling for the best conditions they can get. If the second are successful to any degree, to that degree the first are losers. To the extent that the first are able to use their power to coin wealth out of the labour of the second, to that extent are the second the losers.

Is that clear?

Don't be put off the track by good capitalists. We are not concerned to deny that some members of the capitalist-class are genuinely sorry that the condition of the working-class is so bad and would prefer it otherwise. That is not the point. The point is that as a class their

interests are opposed absolutely to the interests of the class they exploit—the working-class—and under no circumstances whatever can that conflict of interest be avoided.

It does not matter whether the working-class are conscious of it or not. The conflict is inevitable and unceasing. The Socialist calls it *the class-struggle*.

Some of those who claim to be Socialists—members of the Independent Labour Party, particularly—cannot see that this class-struggle exists and must exist. Which shows that they do not thoroughly understand the position. And those who do not thoroughly understand the position cannot be relied upon. They cannot instruct the workers in what they themselves do not understand. . . .

What is the first step the working-class must take to effect that change in the ownership and control of the

means of life which is necessary to the material and permanent betterment of working-class conditions; upon what must their effects be concentrated?

Upon the capture of the political machine. That is to say they must organise and direct their forces with the object of securing control of the legislative and administrative bodies (the House of Commons, County, Urban and Rural Councils, Boards of Guardians, etc.). Why?

Because these bodies are strongholds of the capitalist party. They form their most important line of attack and defence.

. . . . The ignorance of the workers in the past has enabled the capitalists to possess themselves of the political machine. The workers, all unwittingly, have made the rod that is now applied to their backs. But what working-class ignorance has done working-class enlightenment can undo. . . .

## SUCH IS FAME

S PARE a sympathetic thought for that poor unfortunate scrap of humanity, a School Girl in a recent broadcast of "Top of the form." She DIDN'T KNOW that "we celebrated the Prime Minister's 80th Birthday" towards the end of last year.

Can you imagine the dumbfounded astonishment in thousands of homes? Visualise peppery died-in-the-wool Conservatives leaping from their chairs in agony. Surely this highly important, one might almost say, historical event, was not neglected by the schools?

What a jolt for Press and Radio. Loves labour was indeed in vain if it escaped the notice of *any one* in this country who could read or listen, that Sir Winston had a birthday coming to him. For weeks preceding the actual event the Press carried praise and adulation ad nauseum. Everybody who was anybody raised a respectful "tit-fer." Innumerable photos appeared with monotonous regularity in the daily papers and the thought springs to mind that an enormous amount of fish and chips must have been dumped on those austere features. Newspaper articles became lyrical and a letter from Bernard Baruch (America's elder statesman) in the *Daily Express*, November 19, 1954, touched a new low in bathos. The whole thing seemed to border on the ridiculous, as when a sparsely thatched or bald singer arises and starts to warble "Breezes in the long grass ruffling my hair."

Sad to relate, however, bang in the middle of the build-up, like the awful child who throws a stink bomb

at the party, the "Great Man" speaking to his constituent and endeavouring to maintain his role of far-seeing statesman, dropped a terrific clanger. It confirmed what we already knew, that in war, the enemies of today are the allies of tomorrow, and vice-versa, which effectively disposes of those lofty high ideals for which we suppose we are doing battle. Apparently, in 1945, when we were still at war and Germans were villains of the deepest dye, Churchill is said to have instructed Montgomery to be in readiness to re-arm the Germans to fight against the Russians (our allies at that time).

The echoes of this indiscreet pronouncement reverberated in wordy debate round the Houses of Parliament. The "Head Boy" was in disgrace. He tried to recant but it was too late. Montgomery admitted he had received these instructions in a telegram, which, incidentally, he couldn't find. However, its absence proved a boon to cartoonists and radio comics alike for a few weeks to come. It is highly probable that the "Great" Man's faithful, but embarrassed, disciples are beginning to regard him as more of a liability than an asset to the Party. We think him a case in point of our contention that leaders are not only unnecessary but at times a positive menace.

Let's hope the school girl has forgotten that awful moment and that her associates have allowed her to live it down 'ere this.

FEMME.

## THE AMERICAN ELECTION

THE shouting and tumult of the recent Congressional election is over. The American electorate has spoken and the Republican Administration must spend the next two years "wrestling" with a Democratic House and Senate.

There are, of course, certain results worth noting from the Battle of the Ballots. In the first place, the fact that the Democrats captured both Houses of Congress is of extreme importance—to the Democrats. It means that they are once again in a position where much of the spoils of political power will fall their way. They will control the various committees of House and Senate, removing such stalwarts as McCarthy, Velde and Jenner from their

lush chairmanships and replacing them with Democrats. Although it goes without saying that Congressional investigations are carried on as thoroughly and painstakingly under Democratic as under Republican auspices, a good many shortsighted people will be happy to see the last of the "unholy" three, at least as Committee chairmen, and will no doubt consider the results of the balloting as a victory for liberalism, justice and progress.

And of course, while on the subject of investigations, the Democrats will now be in a position to investigate various claims and procedures of the Administration which should aid them in their effort to convince the work-



ing class in 1956 that they should stop being hoodwinked by a Republican president and cabinet and try their luck once again with them. For the working-class there is no gamble involved, however, in a change of government. It's a sure loss either way.

On the other hand, it is a matter of the utmost importance to America's capitalist class that some 45 million people, the overwhelming majority of whom are workers, whether they realize it or not, still think enough of capitalism to turn out in an off-year election and give it a resounding vote of confidence. This fact is something to warm the hearts of our thinking capitalists to their very cockles. Their propaganda still works and the working-class is still under the spell which causes them to identify their interests with those of the capitalists—the class which owns and controls their jobs, their homes, and in fact their very lives. By means of their machinery of propaganda American capitalism with its so-called two-party system is able to achieve the same end-result as the totalitarian regimes without the more obvious crudeness of a one-party election campaign. In other words, the working-class in the United States takes full advantage of its opportunity to choose between individual candidates who can offer nothing but their claim to do the same job better than the other fellows. In fact, the way the elections came out is almost an indication that the workers understand and approve of this fact. For we find an increasing tendency on their part to vote split ballots rather than full party tickets. Take for example the results of Colorado's balloting as set forth in an Associated Press Despatch, November 5, '54:

Voters in Tuesday's general election:  
Elected a Republican Senator.  
Elected a Democratic Governor.  
Elected two Republican House members—and two Democratic House members.  
Elected four Democrats to minor state offices. Elected two Republicans to the other two jobs in the state house.  
Elected enough Republicans to keep them in control of the State Legislature.

To a greater or lesser degree this manner of voting seems to be typical and perhaps indicates that even though the working-class approves of capitalism in general they instinctively recognize that no matter how the campaign baloney is sliced it still comes out the same. To cite one or two more examples we saw that "great liberal" Democrat, Averill Harriman elected to the governorship of N. Y. while that other "great liberal" Democrat, F. D. Roosevelt Jr., got roundly defeated in his bid for the post of Attorney-General. And in Massachusetts, although the jobs of Governor and U. S. Senator were both won by Republicans, the vast difference in the pluralities given each can only indicate a great deal of split-ticket voting.

Predictions on what would happen, by the pollsters and explanations of what actually happened, proved as usual to be a dime-a-dozen. The polls were in the main somewhat over-optimistic on the extent of the Democratic trend, although Look Magazine in its pre-elections issue came fairly close to a correct estimate. Perhaps the biggest flop of all was the election night "predictions" of that vaunted electronic brain, the Univac machine, which had the Democrats winning in both Houses by a veritable landslide. Then there are the columnists who contend that Labour's influence was weak and their opposites who "prove" that it was the strength of Labour which won for the Democrats; and the scribes who see the results as an indication of rising resentment against Eisenhower

and those who see it as a demonstration of his continuing popularity; that it was his 11th hour intervention which saved the Republicans from the beating they were supposed to take. In other words, you steps right up and you takes your choice.

But all the confusion to the contrary notwithstanding, there were and are some important conclusions that Socialists can draw from the elections. Certainly it is true that the widespread interest on the part of the workers in the candidates and their promises is a source of comfort to the capitalists. But like a razor blade this sort of thing is a two-way tool. Just as the blade can shave one's whiskers or cut one's throat, the franchise can be used to elect capitalist politicians and gauge the degree of support for the system or it can also be used to toss out the same politicians together with the system they represent. The increase in the workers' interest in voting can only be accompanied by an increase in their mental activity, understanding and knowledge in the field of politics and this is all to the good.

On the other hand, a possible recognition by the capitalists of the dangers inherent in universal suffrage to the continued existence of their system, does not in itself make it easy for them to eliminate the ballot, as a means of saving their control over affairs. There would have been always the necessity of gaining widespread support among the working people for such an action, and if such support were ever possible to attain in the Western world in the past, we doubt very much that it would be so today.

True, restrictions might possibly be placed against a revolutionary Socialist organization, such as ruling them off the ballot wherever such action might receive enough support. The situation in South Carolina, however, where J. Strum Thurmond, a "Dixiecrat," was elected to the post of U. S. Senator without the backing of the Democratic Party and on a write-in basis at that, demonstrates that even such restrictions are not sufficient to prevent the majority from voting the way they want to when they want to badly enough. In the case of South Carolina the workers supported an arch-enemy of the Supreme Court's anti-segregation stand, a politician more reactionary, if such is possible, than anything the local Democrats had to offer. They nevertheless voted the way they wanted to and when they want Socialism they will be able to vote for that if they want it badly enough.

The American political system of "checks and balances," introduced because of fear of the "rabble," is of course designed in a manner which theoretically would make it more difficult for a Socialist landslide to result in a taking over by Socialists and the immediate conversion of the capitalist state into an administration over things. Although general elections are held every two years, only one third of the Senate is up for re-election at any given time, and the Presidential elections take place every four years. On top of all this is a Supreme Court which does not run for office at all but which is appointed for life. Furthermore, the whole institution of the Senate, for example, is designed to make an overthrow of present society rather difficult due to its composition. A bloc of small backward states, for instance, can muster more voting strength than a lesser number of industrial states with far more population, since each state has but two Senators regardless of size.

And so, constitutional government in the United States is so fashioned that it might almost seem to be a hopeless and impossible task to ever overthrow it in a

constitutional manner. For even if a Socialist majority could gain control of the House of Representatives, what about the Senate? And if they could somehow manage to capture the Senate too, what about the Executive or the Supreme Court?

There is, however, one very serious flaw in any such argument. The flaw is that Socialism itself is a strictly unConstitutional system of society. The U.S. Constitution sanctifies and stands behind the institution of private ownership of the means of production and distribution. Socialism stands four square for the abolition of this type of ownership and the institution of (for want of a better expression), common ownership of these means and instruments. The U.S. Constitution gives Congress the right to "regulate the value of" and coin money. Socialism stands for an abolition of the society which requires money. The U.S. Constitution gives Congress the right

to declare war. Socialism will forever abolish the society of which war is such an integral part. And so on.

Assuming that the present political institutions remain in their present status by the time the overwhelming majority of the American working-class is ready to vote for Socialism, we can be certain of one thing. A Socialist majority at the polls will not be stopped by Constitutional "checks and balances" nor does it seem reasonable to assume that a capitalist class will attempt, in the face of a landslide of revolutionary Socialist votes, to stem the tide with their Senate, President and Supreme Court. There will be but one course of action for them to take—face the music, roll up their sleeves with the rest of us, and help to establish Socialism, the greatest reorganization of society the world will have ever known.

HARMO.

(Reproduced from "Western Socialist," November-December, 1954).

## THE PASSING SHOW



### It makes a change

Truth is many-sided, so they say. It certainly tends to revolve with the years. In 1944, the newspapers were filled with stories of German atrocities. You remember?—"I'm against war, of course, but we've got to fight the Germans, because they're so cruel." Now, in 1955, German atrocities are forgotten; instead we are allowed to hear about—Allied atrocities.

One of the units of the French Army is called the French Foreign Legion. There is nothing romantic about it—pounding a barrack square in Sidi Bel Abbès is no more exciting than pounding a barrack square in Kettering. It differs from the other units of the French armed forces chiefly in that its members undergo a training designed to make them even more brutal, even more inured to death and suffering (their own or other people's) than the ordinary soldier. This unit, naturally, fought for the French—and British—capitalist class during the last war.

A Reynolds News reporter interviewed a former member of the Foreign Legion recently, and the results of his investigations were printed under a four-column heading (5-12-54). This old soldier is now a farm worker, and the scraping monotony of the worker's peace-time life leads him to look back nostalgically even to the discomforts and dangers of his army days. He is reported to have said:

"More young boys should join the Legion. A fine life of adventure. Tough, mind you. I've seen a man nailed to a tree with a long, needle-sharp bayonet. If you kill another Legionnaire, you just get a pal to help you bury him. Next day he is marked absent. There is no investigation."

But this was not all. More illuminating still is his account of the campaign in Norway in 1940.

"If we caught a couple of officers, we would hold one and let the other go. When he had gone a few yards, a Legionnaire would throw a knife in his back. Then the other would be allowed to escape—to spread the story among his friends."

Ten years ago this story alone would, suitably written up, have provided two columns of war-propaganda in any German newspaper. Let it not be thought, however, that the Reynolds News reporter tells the story without comment. The reporter thought up (and his sub-editor agreed with) a considered observation on this device. How did he describe it?

It was, he said, "a neat way to lower German morale."

### Out in the cold

From Reynolds News to another paper which supports the Labour Party—the Daily Herald. The Herald also claims to be a Socialist newspaper. How far this is true you may judge from two articles which have recently appeared in its pages (December 14th and 15th, 1954.) Both were by Labour M.P.'s. The first, by James Callaghan, draws our attention to the fact that the Royal Navy isn't as powerful as it once was. "The Army and the R.A.F. have won the ear of the Government," he says. "The Navy has been left out in the cold." "The Government itself," he goes on, "seems to treat British sea-power as of small account." How lucky for the Admirals that

(Continued on page 25)



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

FEBRUARY,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## THE TRAGEDY OF THE RAILWAYMEN

THE railwaymen are congratulating themselves on having obtained wage increases that will relieve a little their miserable position and raise their purchasing power somewhat above what it was under the Labour Government.

Mr. Campbell, General Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, was induced to praise the Minister of Labour in the Conservative Government, Sir Walter Monckton, who has fallen ill, for the part he played in the settlement:—

"I trust that Sir Walter will be back in his normal good health, with that kindly disposition that he has. Sir Walter Monckton, in the recent dispute, was a very able friend of the N.U.R. He did help considerably in bridging the differences between the Transport Commission and ourselves." (Manchester Guardian, 17/1/55.)

But even after the N.U.R.'s Tory friend has helped them in their struggle against the nationalised organisation set up in 1947 by their Labour friends, what have the railwaymen to rejoice about? Their attitude, as evidenced by statements of their leaders, and of spokesmen of the Labour Party, that many of them support, is a matter of lamentation, a tragedy of working class misdirection of effort. For the better part of half a century they were misguided enough to suppose that their problems would be solved by getting rid of the railway companies and replacing them by nationalisation or State capitalism. So when the Labour Government nationalised the railways they were triumphant. They had, so they thought, and so their leaders told them, reached a blessed

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD February, 1955

end of their endeavours. But what has it brought them? Nothing but a prolongation of their discontents.

Not, of course, that it brought nothing to anyone. The railway shareholders, secure in the enjoyment of a fixed interest guaranteed by the Government, and of an amount far greater than they would now be enjoying if the railways had been left to decline in competition with road transport, they are the people who can congratulate themselves on their good fortune.

The tragedy for the workers is pin-pointed by statements made by the N.U.R. General Secretary, Mr. J. Campbell. Addressing the committee of inquiry on December 30 he told of the poverty of the railwaymen, the inadequacy of the 125/- minimum that the Union had "reluctantly agreed to" in October, only to have it repudiated by the membership. He said that they had come to the conclusion that their only hope was a strike, though "the possibility of a railway strike is regarded as a national disaster" (Daily Herald 31/12/54 and Evening News 30/12/54). A considerable part of his statement consisted of evidence that railwaymen's earnings are less than those of workers in a number of private industries.

This was the goal they had reached by wasting time on nationalisation—"widespread dissatisfaction," "a deep-rooted malaise in the industry" large numbers of railwaymen leaving to get better-paid jobs elsewhere. He dwelt on the fact that the Transport Commission pleaded inability to pay its way and meet the £40 million annual cost of interest payments to the former owners, though disclaiming any desire to discontinue the payments. He had written some time earlier:—

"We are not asking that the £40 million paid every year to transport stockholders should be discontinued. But we question the wisdom and justice of making that the first charge on railway revenue." (Reynolds News, 12/12/54.)

What he wanted was also, not "some annual subsidy but we do suggest that the Commission should be relieved for a few years at any rate of some of the financial burden placed upon them by Parliament" (Daily Herald 31/12/54).

He did not recall, but could well have done so that the financial arrangements of the nationalised railways were those introduced in the Nationalisation Act by the Labour Government, backed as it was by the N.U.R.

Not that the requirement to meet this charge ought to have worried the railway workers. As the Government wants the railways kept in being for war as well as peace time transport purposes the failure to produce the profit required by the Act need have worried them even less than it worries the Government. As was shown when the Government wanted the oceanic telegraph cables laid and maintained for strategic purposes, subsidies (amounting to £2,000,000) were readily forthcoming. It is true that more than 60 years ago the principle was laid down by the 1888 Select Committee on Revenue Estimates that in order to secure efficiency the nationalised Post Office "should . . . continue to be conducted with a view to profit," and this principle has been accepted by successive Labour Governments for nationalised concerns generally, but capitalism is always prepared to find ways round this when its strategic interests are involved.

It is also true that the Labour Party has put forward the principle that nationalised industries should be "a public service", divorced from capitalist considerations of profit, but this merely indicates their mental confusion in supposing that state capitalism can be run on other than

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD February, 1955

capitalist lines.

One other interesting point brought out by Mr. Campbell (Reynolds News 12/12/54) is that there is a proposal to modernise the railways at a cost of £500 million; but this is for the future.

Successive Governments since the war have not felt able to provide such a sum. It is, however, exactly the amount that, according to the Prime Minister of South Africa (Sunday Times 19/12/54) has in recent years been

## THE PASSING SHOW—continued from page 23

Comrade Callaghan is in there fighting, defending their interests with voice and pen. In a Socialist world, it is true, there would be no markets, no buying and selling, no antagonistic groups of people to defend or attack; but Mr. Callaghan apparently has no inkling of the fact that the capitalist system will not last for ever. He looks for nothing more than a few reforms. He allows himself a peep in the crystal ball, but all he has to say about it is this:

"Who knows—one day we may even see the eventual amalgamation of the Navy and R.A.F., to the advantage of both and at less cost to the nation."

Who knows, Mr. Callaghan—one day we may even see the abolition of all the armed forces, to the advantage of us all. But that could only happen when we have Socialism.

## Ultimately disintegrates

Forecasting the future is not the sole prerogative of Mr. Callaghan. The day after his article appeared, the Herald gave us an instalment of Old Wigg's Almanac, disguised as the opinions of George Wigg, M.P., on the state of the Army. What is mainly wrong, apparently, is that the Army isn't getting enough recruits: there is a danger of its becoming smaller. "That process has already started," says Mr. Wigg. "Even at this stage there is a tremendous shortage of N.C.O.s—a shortage that is bound to get worse." For those whose eyes are not blinded by tears at the news that there are fewer sergeant-majors than there were, here is another quotation:

"As for the War Office, it is moving into a manpower crisis that unless it is checked at once the Army will ultimately disintegrate."

That a Labour M.P. could refer to the ultimate disintegration of the Army as a matter for anger rather than for rejoicing goes far to show where the Labour Party stands. What is Mr. Wigg worrying about? While there is a capitalist class there will be an Army to defend it; when we abolish capitalism the Army will be abolished with it, because it will no longer have anything to do. The article says "there are certain issues that are greater than Party advantage." One could express the sentiment more clearly by saying that there are certain issues which are above the differences between the Labour and Conservative Parties; and the most important of these is the maintenance of the capitalist system, and the armed forces which are an integral part of that system. Hence the public debate as to which party can provide us with "better" armed forces. If, therefore, you want a slicker, more efficient, more up-to-date Army and Navy, you will work and vote for whichever party you think is more likely to provide them; but if you are sick of the system

invested from Britain in South Africa. Among other things it has gone into gold mining, influenced no doubt by the fact that there have been discoveries of uranium which, in these atomic days, is of supreme importance to capitalism.

It is time that the railwaymen and other workers woke up to the fact that capitalism, whether private or nationalised, offers them nothing but a continuance of the unceasing struggle to maintain their poverty-stricken existence. Only Socialism can provide the remedy they need

which produces war and murderous war-machines, reformed or unreformed, you will work and vote for Socialism.

## Shop-soiled goods

Observe the curious performance of the Bevanites. They write and speak against German rearmament. For, they say, the Germans are too dangerous to be trusted ever again with arms—their "national character" is "aggressive" and "militaristic."

In this they resemble a sucker who has been sold a gold-brick. The confidence trickster has been so eloquent about the contents of the parcel he has been trying to sell, that the sucker continues to believe that it really does contain a gold-brick long after the trick has been brought to a successful conclusion, and long after the con-man himself, with a bland smile, admits the parcel contains nothing more than scrap-iron. The part of the con-man in this little drama is played by the British capitalist class and those who agitate on its behalf. It was necessary to convince the workers that the Germans were incurably aggressive and brutal, in order to lash them into the frenzy necessary for the successful pursuit of the war. Now the war is over, the whole story has been quietly dropped—in fact, since the German and British ruling classes have now found that their common interests are threatened, and have become allies, the official version of the Germans' "national character" has undergone a complete reversal. But although the rest of the political troops—Labour, Liberal and Conservative—have about-turned and are marching in the opposite direction, the Bevanites, with a remarkable devotion to stale and exploded maxims, steadfastly hold their course.

It is, however, difficult to reconcile the claim of the Bevanites to be "international Socialists" with this grim adherence to theories which even many of the propagandists who produce them never believed in.

## Belated enlightenment

Equally difficult to understand is the attitude of the Communist Party to the now-famous speech of Sir Winston Churchill's, at Woodford, in which he said that he ordered Field-Marshal Montgomery to stack the arms captured from the Germans, in case the Russians advanced too far: so that they could be re-issued to the German soldiers, who would then be fighting on our side. On 16-12-54 the Daily Worker said: "TU organisations in Scotland are still protesting vigorously against Sir Winston Churchill's stacking Nazi-arms speech at Woodford." What are they protesting about? This speech of Churchill's only revealed what all Socialists knew already—that the war of 1939-45 was not a war against Nazism, or a war "for democracy" against "totalitarianism," but simply a war between two alliances of national capitalist groups. The



British Army was sent to fight the German Army up to and including 1945 because the German capitalists were a threat to the British ruling class; but it was obvious that if the Russian ruling class sent its troops forward beyond a certain point, they would become more dangerous to British capitalist interests than the Germans. It was natural, therefore, to guard against such a contingency.

Marshal Zhukov also protests against the Woodford speech. He says (*The Times*, 17-12-54):

"The British command in Europe, under direct instructions from Churchill, not only collected and stored arms of the defeated German troops in order to arm the remnants of these troops against their allies, but also preserved for a considerable time organized units of the German Army."

But Marshal Zhukov knows quite well that modern states choose their allies, not on any a priori principles or on considerations of what system of internal government the potential ally may have, but strictly in accordance with the advantage to be obtained for the interests of that state. As conditions change, so do alliances dissolve and re-form. If the Anglo-American troops had

advanced into Poland during the 1945 campaigns, Soviet Russia would, beyond question, have turned her arms against them, and would have accepted any help she could get—even from the defeated Germans. Marshal Zhukov cannot have forgotten that Soviet Russia concluded an alliance in 1939 not with defeated, and therefore discredited, Nazi leaders, but with those leaders still victorious; and that the Russian and German Armies co-operated in an aggressive and successful campaign against Poland.

Protests against the Woodford speech have come from such diverse sources as the Russian rulers, the Communist Party in this country, the Labour leaders, *The Times* newspaper leader-writers. These people have one thing in common. They do not share Churchill's readiness to admit that war-propaganda they put out about the "eternal friendship between the British and Russian leaders" in the early nineteen-forties was so much hypocrisy.

JOSHUA.

## THE HORRORS

"COMIC" means droll or mirth-raising; a comic is, or used to be, a funny paper for children. Meanings are always changing, however, and a comic today is merely a strip-drawing, funny or not. Two or three years ago there was agitation over the American comics which are simply pulp-fiction in pictures; now it has revived and redoubled for "horror comics".

Horror comics are not droll. Nor, really, are they horrible—such effects need a Zola or a Poe. "Horrific" is the word, connoting a surfeit of unpleasant sights and symbols, for that is what the horror comics offer. The preface to a *Black Magic Album* states its intention:

"We really are proud of this new polluted publication. . . . We aim to publish this putrid periodical every three months, and take it from me, each agonising issue will contain horrifying hours of revolting reading for all you slime absorbers. . . . Remember, too, if you are a horror fan and not too squeamish you will find a sickening selection of slimy stories in our other mouldering mags."

It borders without quite touching facetiousness, suggesting instead a contemptuous leer at the goggling reader.

At their height, about a dozen horror comics were on sale, with such titles as *The Monster of Frankenstein*, *Tales from the Crypt*, *Vault of Horror* and *Ghostly Weird Stories*. Each contains, according to price, from eight to twenty picture-stories of three or four pages, with a bit of prose narrative thrown in. Some (not all) have unobtrusive notices that they are not suitable for "the kiddies"; all carry, whole-page advertisements of other horror comics, making the distributors' intentions obvious.

The themes of horror-comic stories are death by violence, torture, putrefaction and ghosts. In *Come Back, Little Linda* a demented old man sits "amid the foul odour of decay and rot and unremoved human excrements" caressing a giant rat. *Mess Call* involves a butcher who sells human meat, until his mad employee turns on him—"crunching the bone . . . hearing the



sucking sounds . . . stabbing . . . slashing . . . cutting him to ribbons . . . his face . . . his eyes . . . the blood pouring . . . pouring . . ." *Doom in the Tomb* shows a man skinned alive by wakened corpses; another depicts simply the stages of slow death from exposure. Werewolves and wife-killers, lunatics and vampires are the performers in this necrophiliac music-hall where no turn is left unstoned, unstrangled or unlacerated.

It is not surprising that people should object to horror comics. The National Union of Teachers held an exhibition of them in London and drew up lists of approved papers and publishers—a fine free advertisement, incidentally, for D. C. Thomson, Hulton's and the Amalgamated Press. All over the place, committees

have been formed and meetings called to demand a ban on horror comics. What is surprising is that the protests have gone on after the publications have stopped. The firms mainly responsible for introducing and distributing horror comics in this country took fright and abandoned them at the first outcry; none has been issued since. There is a second-hand market, but it is obviously transitory and limited by the fact that pulp magazines don't stand much handling.

Undoubtedly many of the objectors do not know this. Few respectable people would chance going into one of the shops where American comics are obtainable, among the sadistic novels and the art studies; the writer knows several people who are firm that horror comics should be banned without having seen one. On the other hand, some of them do know it and in fact are concerned less with horror comics than with securing an all-round extension of censorship. A correspondent to the *New Statesman* recently mentioned he had joined various anti-comic committees and found them all to have unadvertised aims. And the indignant letter-writers about "1984" showed that, in many cases, they want anything banned that they dislike.

Indeed, the proposals for legislation against horror comics are curiously vague in definition. A draft is to go before Parliament, aiming at publications which dwell on crime, nourish national and racial hatreds, or dangle violence and sex before the eyes of the young. If passed, how will it be applied? To the daily and Sunday newspapers, some of which answer all the description? Obviously not. If it means anything, it means *certain* crimes, *certain* national and racial hatreds, sex and violence in *certain* ways.

It is nothing new for juvenile or popular fiction to pile on the horror. The post-Gothic writers of a hundred and forty years ago served lashings of it; Mr. E. S. Turner has chronicled them in his amusing informative "Boys Will Be Boys". Here, for example, is a bit from "Varney the Vampire":

" . . . With a strange howling cry that was enough to awaken terror in every breast, the figure seized the long tresses of her hair and twining them round his bony hands he held her to the bed. Then she screamed. . . . The glassy horrible eyes of the figure ran over the angelic form with a hideous satisfaction—horrible profanation. He drags her head to the bed's edge. He forces it back by the long hair still entwined in his grasp. With a plunge he seizes her neck in his fang-like teeth—a gush of blood and a hideous sucking noise follows. The girl has swooned and the vampire is at his hideous repast!"

Enough to make the most jet-conscious 12-year-old put his head under the bedclothes.

The morbidity and the ghoulishness are nothing new, by themselves: the new things are the picture form and the intention. Bad drawing always looks worse than bad writing, pictorial crudity always more offensive than the written stuff. There has been, too, a general dislike for the dominance of strips over "real stories" in children's papers. When the goody, parson-sponsored *Boy's Own Paper* was founded in the 'seventies it was all solid reading matter; the equally sturdy *Eagle* of the 1950's is all strips, that being the state of the market. Educationists do not care for strip-drawn literature. One wonders, however, how much they have contributed to it—what part visual teaching methods and easy, pictorial school-books have played in creating a generation which wants it all in pictures.

As for the intention . . . It is difficult to suppose that the horror-comic artists and story-writers do not know they are producing bilge, and unpleasant bilge at that. The professional bilge-writer is a modern phenomenon. J. M. Rymer, the author of "Varney the Vampire", thought he was a good writer (so, apparently, did the critics, for in a second edition he thanked "the whole of the Metropolitan Press for their laudatory notices"). The past has held plenty of bad, stupid, dreary writers, but they meant to create masterpieces; the present holds the writers who churn out sentiment, sensation and vulgarity to feed "the market". In just the same way, thousands of more or less competent craftsmen in all trades live by turning out tenth-rate jobs and can't do anything about it.

The speeches and letters and arguments about horror comics would suggest that they are like a sudden pestilence visiting a fair field. In fact, they are only a very blatant demonstration of something which runs through almost all popular culture today. The position was unintentionally well shown in a recent issue of *Picture Post*: a main article indicting horror comics, and a few pages later a ten-inch picture of a slugging in a gangster story. Go to the pictures, and you'll see bigger and bloodier beatings-up. Look on the hoardings, and there are monsters from other worlds come to terrify voluptuous nymphs. Read the latest novels, and half of them are about concentration camps, necromancy and concupiscence.

Horror comics, like the erethistic films and books, are a product of civilization in our time. For comparison, the Greeks had a convention that death or violence should never be shown in their public entertainments. Not that the ancient world didn't know about violence—its wars exceeded modern ones in destruction of everything, life included. Our world, however, abounds with frustration and unsatisfied need, and it is from those that the horror comics and their like grow. Vicarious stimulation takes the place of real satisfaction, and the more there is of it, the more is required (the decline in the popularity of speedway is worth notice in that regard). It is true—and disgusting—that many people's lives are such that they get some sort of satisfaction from the thought of a maniac or a monster pawing a pretty girl. A bit of capitalist civilisation, gentle reader.

The disappearance of horror comics will mean no less to anybody (not even the producers, who can probably cash in on the reaction by selling Bible comics instead). Neither does it cure anything, however, just to have the symptoms covered up. "Tales from the Crypt" is another pointer to the condition of man in our time.

What about the children? Well, unpleasant as horror comics are, it is absurd to suppose they can turn ordinary children into bloodthirsty delinquents. More likely, they would give them nightmares—which is just what a Rider Haggard story did for this writer when he was very young. Their contribution to delinquency can only be adding coal to existing fires.

The point which has received least publicity of all is that children don't *have* to read horror comics. It's a pity one cannot as simply guard one's young from wars, disease and poverty by saying: "Ah, well—we won't let him have them."

R. COSTER.



## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

**Bloomsbury Branch** has taken a hall in Central London, The Forum Club, 33, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, for four consecutive Sundays. The two first meetings will have been held by the time this issue is available but details of the meetings to be held on Sunday evenings, February 6th and 13th are on page 31. The meetings are experimental and the Branch is anxious that the meetings are well supported and so enable further arrangements to be made. Most members and sympathisers will well remember the successful Sunday evening meetings held at the Trade Union Club, Leicester Square which were held regularly for several years. When the Club closed down suitable accommodation elsewhere was not available and having discovered this hall in Percy Street, branch members are anxious to recommence propaganda meetings there. Please make a note of the dates and the address and give the meetings your support.

\* \* \*  
Putney/Rochampton. Will members and sym-

pathisers living in these districts contact Comrade M. Dunn if they are interested in forming a group. Comrade Dunn's address is 153, Hayward Gardens, Putney Heath, S.W. 15, and he would be willing to arrange meetings at his home.

\* \* \*

Our First Film Show at Head Office was very successful. The film "1848" showed the events in Paris in that year through contemporary drawings by Daumier, the famous—and prolific—cartoonist. A good-sized audience watched and heard a commentary by E. Kersley, and there was no doubt of a good reception.

Following the film, H. Young spoke to point the relationship between 1848 and 1955 (his contribution is to be published in next issue.) There will be more films at Head Office in the near future; given the right films and the right initial support, they can become an important part of our propaganda. P.H.

## JAPAN IN TROUBLE

**E**ACH year in May, as we in England are feeling the first draughts of our Summer, the people in the drowsy little south Japanese port of Shimoda come out to celebrate their Festival of the Black Ships. This marks the anniversary of the first appearance off the Japanese coast of the paddle-wheeled warships of Commodore Matthew Cailbraith Perry of the United States Navy, who in 1853 brought a letter from the American President asking the rulers of Japan to open their country to foreign trade.

Perry landed in July. In an uncomfortable ceremony lasting about half-an-hour he handed the President's message to the Lords of Izu and Iwami, who represented the Japanese rulers. In the manner of one who rather expected an unfavourable reply, the American promised to return in the following Spring. When he came back there were months of reluctant negotiations before Japan agreed to the first American Treaty of Peace and Amity, signed at Kanagawa (Yokohama) in March, 1854. This was the spark-off to a century of development and expansion which made Japan one of the world's great industrial powers and a major force in Asian affairs. Japanese ambitions and potentialities are still a considerable factor in the world; they are responsible to-day for part of the strain which tests the Anglo-American alliance.

## Sunk in Feudalism

At the time of Perry, Japan was sunk in feudalism: her main productive class were her peasants. The size of her population—about 30 millions—had not varied much for over 150 years. Japan was a hermit country which allowed only meagre contacts, through a few Dutch and Chinese traders, with the outside world. The decrees which imposed the death penalty on the return of a person who had left the country and limited the building

of ships to those of 50 tons were designed to maintain the country's isolation. Japan had virtually no highways and few wheeled vehicles; the general standard of economic development was similar to that of 15th Century Europe. (London was two years past the Great Exhibition—the Stockton and Darlington Railway had been open for 28 years.)

It is, therefore, not wonderful that Perry's warships caused such a commotion amongst the primitive Japanese peasants. Yet within 40 years these same peasants were to successfully fight a modern war against China and a decade later to astound the world by defeating the great power of Russia. The Russo-Japanese war of 1904/5 was the first instance since the decline of Turkey of victory by a non-European country over a Western power. Japan's expansion continued until in 1944 she held the greater part of East Asia. The defeat of 1945 reduced her possessions to roughly those of the mid-nineteenth century but found her with a population two and a half times as large and an industrial power grown out of all comparison.

When the atomic dust had cleared from the Pacific in 1945 a number of re-arrangements were evident. Great Britain's power had seriously declined and the destruction of her naval units whilst the United States Navy ranged up and down the ocean had left the military initiative in American hands. So the responsibility of checking Russian and Chinese penetration into the rich markets and raw materials of Asia was inevitably assigned to America, who to this end has built a system of strategic possessions, based on mutual assistance pacts, right across the Pacific. This system includes New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, South Korea, Nationalist China and Japan, all dependent on America for their Pacific defence.

## War in Korea

The Korean war sharply emphasized Japan's strategic and material importance to the United States' plans. In 1952 procurements (purchases of supplies for the use of armed forces) by the United States in Japan were at the rate of \$2,800,000 a day and over the period of 1951/3 they aggregated \$2,500 million, invested to maintain the war in Korea, defend Japan and build up other Far Eastern states. The heavy wartime demand brought to Japan the inevitable shortages, hectically booming industries and rising prices. An article costing 100 yen in January, 1948, by December, 1953 had risen to 423 yen. The wanderer in Japan's cities could see for himself the evidence of this artificial prosperity. The night clubs, the geisha girls and the strip-tease dancers were plying a brisk trade; in the streets the automobiles of the occupation forces swam silently along, like garish tropical fish. Typically, an emigrant couple who returned to spend their last few years of life in Tokyo were forced to return to the comparative cheapness of Miami. It was very unreal and very unhealthy.

The peace in Korea saw the reduction of American investment—procurements fell from \$79 million in July, 1953, to under \$14 million in the August and Japan was left to make her own way in the world. Under an austerity programme which evokes memories of 1947 Britain, imports of rice were cut by a third, of wheat by one-tenth and of sugar by nearly one-fifth. A five-year plan published in July, 1953, aimed to capture markets in S. E. Asia, and to increase exports from the 1952 level of \$1,180 million to \$1,460 million by 1958. The plan also intended to enlarge Japan's merchant fleet, and reduce the price of coal, iron, steel, and other necessary products.

## Stumbling Blocks

A number of stumbling blocks stood in the way of Japanese recovery. The 1945 war had cost Japanese capitalism its old sources of coal, iron ore and cotton in Korea, Manchuria, Formosa and Northern China. The market, which, before 1939 had been a "natural"—China—was closed by pressure from Washington, whilst Britain restricted Japanese exports to the British Colonies, the very markets which Japan needs perhaps most of all. Many Japanese exports, notably drugs and weaving machines, were badly handicapped by the lower prices of similar goods from Western Europe and America. And just around the corner from Singapore, India had begun to build her industries, some of which, particularly in textiles, are bidding fair to replace their Japanese counterpart as low-price competitive producers. These economic troubles were causing political and social unrest and a desperate Japan saw her stability seriously threatened. In an effort to break into the markets controlled by the Western powers, Japan applied for membership of the free-trading "club" of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). These efforts have so far been frustrated by the votes of the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

## G.A.T.T.

GATT (an ugly name—they are looking for an alternative) was originally a temporary agreement—signed in 1947—designed to secure tariff concessions and regulate international trading policy. But when in December, 1950, the United States refused to ratify the Havana Charter of the International Trade Organisation, which

had been intended to supersede GATT, then GATT drifted into permanency. It now includes countries which account for 80 per cent. of world trade, although excluding Russia, China and Japan. The general principles of GATT are to extend favourable treatment of imports to all members of the agreement; to reduce tariffs; to abolish the preferences by which a country admits imports from selected sources free of duty or at a reduced rate of duty; to ensure that imports are not taxed more heavily than similar home produce; to discourage government subsidies on exports and to provide that any restrictions on the quantities of imports should not discriminate against any particular country. Despite the many loopholes in its rules (Great Britain stubbornly continues to run an extensive system of Imperial Preference), GATT has succeeded in fixing the import duties on 55,000 items, and has provided a hearing for allegations of "unfair" trading practices. (Many complaints have been lodged about the restrictions which the United States applies to imports of dairy produce—Holland has been allowed to retaliate.) Membership of GATT, with the benefits which go with it, is most attractive to any extensively trading country. That is why Japan has tried for some years to join, only to be blocked by the constitutionally necessary three votes.

## Fear of Japan

Britain's opposition to Japanese membership of GATT is rooted in the fear of a revival of the fierce and ruthless competition of before the war, accentuated by the decline in British standing in the Pacific since 1945. The Board of Trade is reluctant to extend to Japan an agreement which gives its members the right to demand the breaking down of the Imperial Preference system, a large part of the value of which is in the assistance it gives to the supply from the Colonies of raw materials which would otherwise have to be sought in dollar markets. Yet there cannot be a complete British blockage of Japan's trading, for Japan is quite ready to impose her own restrictions on imports from the United Kingdom. So the hoary expedient of a compromise is being explored—Britain, whilst continuing to oppose Japanese membership of GATT is prepared to negotiate trade agreements which would grant a similar relationship between the two countries but would reserve the right to give protection to any British industry seriously damaged by Japanese competition.

An example of a similar compromise is the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Trade Agreement in January of last year, which was remarkable for the concessions gained by Japanese capitalism. The renewed pact allowed limited amounts of some traditional Japanese exports to the United Kingdom. The small amounts of cotton and rayon piece goods, pottery and toys, which were granted entry were not expected to have much effect upon British industries. The main concessions, which aroused such protests in Staffordshire and Lancashire, were in lifting the restrictions upon the entry of Japanese goods in to the Colonies. In return, Japan agreed to maintain her imports from the sterling area.

## Japanese Neutrality

At present, Japan's trade is mainly with the Western world and any obstacle which she meets from that direction must jeopardise her stability as a link in American strategy in the Pacific. That is why America is to negotiate to reduce her tariffs on imports from Japan and to offer similar concessions to countries which lower their



own barriers to Japanese goods. From the State Department's point of view, even more serious than mere instability is the tendency in Japanese business and political circles to adopt an attitude of neutrality in the Russo/Chinese/American conflict. This outlook is inspired by the prospect of the trading opportunities which are offered by China and Russia. Japan's exports to China during 1954 came to over \$20 million; it is hoped that by 1957 this figure will be boosted to \$56 million. Imports from China included amounts of coal, which may be increased at the expense of supplies from America. A provisional barter agreement is in force between Russia and Japan which exchanges Russian coal, timber, manganese and oil for Japanese ships—these transactions are expected to amount to about \$80 million over the next two years. Mr. Hatoyama, who succeeded Mr. Yoshida as Prime Minister, has recently called for the opening of diplomatic relations with China as an aid to freer trade; this intention, according to the Tokyo correspondent of the *Observer*, "... won quick popular approval..."

#### Year of the Sheep

Of all the Pacific states which are tied to America,

### "THE YEAR OF THE BOMB"

FRIDAY, the 31st December, 1954, saw the publication under the above heading of one of the most blatantly tendentious articles that has ever appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*. It was like the *Daily Worker* in reverse, and we feel sure it is an augury of what the Soviet bloc must expect throughout the coming year in the verbal war between East and West.

The article points out the terrible effects of the H-bomb, in particular "that the biological consequences are uncertain. Some scientists say that radiation may cause the birth of deficient or deformed children...". The article then goes on to point out that people "have begun to grasp what these bombs mean. They have begun to ask whether any government could ever use such weapons. The answer, a bitter and unhappy answer, is that some governments might. We cannot count on a Communist Government respecting the interests of common humanity." The article also mentions the millions murdered and imprisoned in Soviet labour camps in Northern Siberia.

No one could detest the Russian system more than we Socialists—and what was said about Russia is possibly quite true, but it is equally valid for the Western Powers. Apart from the fact that the first concentration camps were set up by the British in South Africa during the Boer War, and the slave labour in the Crown colonies, it is also a fact that the first atom bombs were dropped by the Americans in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The effects of the bombs at the time were unknown, but it was known that they would be devastating. The biological consequences in the case of the Atom bomb were and still are uncertain. The same held good for the Atom bomb then as for the H-bomb now. And who knows what genetical monstrosities may not turn up in the future, caused by the Nagasaki and Hiroshima handiwork? Yet all this was done ostensibly on behalf of "Democracy" and the "Western Way of Life". There was little respect for

Japan, because of the importance of her trade and her economic uncertainty, is the most vulnerable to Russian and Chinese penetration. A break from America would remove the State Department's counterweight to Chinese expansion and would necessitate for American capitalism, a truly agonising reappraisal of its strategy in the Far East. In this delicate situation, British obstruction of Japan's commercial adventures and her devoutly wishing that Japanese ambitions could be satisfied in her old market in China strike a distinctly jarring note and bring more than a hint of disharmony into the Anglo/American concord.

So 1955, marked in the Japanese calendar as the Year of the Sheep, opens in an atmosphere of confusion and indecision, which may be resolved by the general election which is expected in the Spring. The results will be of great interest. Shepherd Dulles and his dogs will be keenly watching for any sign that the Japanese sheep is wandering into the Russian or Chinese fold. And British capitalism will be keeping an anxious look-out for the reappearance of the old wolf of the Far East.

IVAN.

"the interests of common humanity" in that particular instance.

All this of course contrasts rather strangely with the one-sided article in the *Manchester Guardian*. The truth of the matter is that when property is threatened governments everywhere fall over themselves in their haste to protect it, and use every weapon at their disposal in that endeavour.

Who drops the H-bomb first, and where, is dependant upon whose interests are threatened and how much—and it might be the Western powers who do the dropping again! Whoever drops the H-bomb (if it is dropped), East or West, we can be sure that it will be in the interests of "Peace", the Eastern or Western "Way of Life".

As Socialists we have continually pointed out that the only solution to A-bombs, H-bombs, and all the other horrible instruments of modern warfare is to get rid of this capitalist system, and replace it with a society in which the means of living are held in common and equality of access prevails. Then, and only then, with the abolition of this system, with its racial, religious, national, class and individual antagonisms and prejudices, can we live a life where social harmony and equality will be an established fact; and war, poverty and insecurity a thing of the past.

JON KEYS.

"I can no more understand that any serious injury can come to my moral nature from disbelief in Samson than from disbelief in Jack the Giant-Killer. I care as little for Goliath as for the giant Blunderbore. I am glad that children should amuse themselves with nursery stories, but it is shocking that they should be ordered to believe in them as solid facts, and then be told that such superstition is essential to morality."

SIR LESLIE STEPHEN.

#### HACKNEY LECTURES

on  
Alternate Mondays in February, at 8 p.m.  
CO-OP. HALL

197 MARE STREET, E.8

Feb. 14th. "An Analysis of Present Day Capitalism."  
—E. WILMOTT.

Feb. 28th. "The Question of Art."—M. JUDD.

#### DARTFORD BRANCH DISCUSSIONS

at  
LABOUR CLUB, LOWFIELD STREET, DARTFORD  
Meetings Commence at 8 p.m.

Fri. Feb. 11th. "SOME ASPECTS OF CRISES."—E. HARDY.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION. ALL WELCOME.

#### SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at  
52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET  
(Clapham North or Clapham Common Tube Stns.)

A series of regular Sunday evening lectures will be held at Head Office throughout the winter. Commencing each Sunday at 8 p.m.

Feb. 6th. "The Economics of Health."—H. JARVIS.

" 13th. "Socialism and Plenty."—J. D'ARCY.

" 20th. "The Colour Question and Socialism."—S. CASH.

" 27th. "Socialism and Visual Propaganda."—E. KERSLEY.

Mar. 6th. "Industry since 1848" (with film illustrations).—E. KERSLEY and GILMAC.

#### MANCHESTER MEETING

at  
ONWARD HALL, DEANSGATE, MANCHESTER

Thursday, February 3rd, at 7.30 p.m.

"Socialism and Plenty."—J. D'ARCY.

#### BLOOMSBURY LECTURES

Sundays at 7.30 p.m.

at

THE FORUM CLUB  
33 PERCY STREET, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD

Feb. 6th. "Analysis of Post-War Capitalism."—E. WILMOTT.

Feb. 13th. "Capitalism and Production."—E. HARDY.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

#### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

#### SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to  
Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High  
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Please send SOCIALIST STANDARD for 12 months  
(6 months, 2/9) for which 5/6 is enclosed.

Name .....  
(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address .....

.....  
(State if renewal or new subscriber.)



## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL.**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP.**—Secretary: R. Smith, 1, Little John Street, Dundee. Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 9th and 23rd February, 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**HOUNSLOW.**—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

**OLDHAM.**—Group meets Wednesdays 2nd and 16th February, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

**ROMFORD.**—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.). Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

**RUGBY.**—Group meets alternate Mondays 7th and 21st February, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

**WATFORD.**—Group meets alternate Thursdays 3rd and 17th February at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Road, (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

## GLASGOW MEETINGS

(City and Kelvingrove Branches)

at

CENTRAL HALLS, BATH STREET

Sundays at 7.30 p.m.

(Doors open 7 p.m.)

Feb. 6th. "Our Principles and Policy."—R. NORRIE.

Feb. 13th. "Need for Socialism."—A. SHAW.

"20th. "Day to Day Struggle."—C. McEWEN.

"27th. "Burning Issue."—D. WEBSTER.

Mar. 6th. Subject to be announced.—J. HIGGINS.

## PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS

PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2  
Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

## LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Mondays: Finsbury Square.  
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.  
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.  
Thursdays: Tower Hill.  
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

## SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.

Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee at the Head Office or to a local branch.

## BOREHAM WOOD

Will members and sympathisers willing to cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood contact:

I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,  
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY.** Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m., 3rd and 17th February.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT.** The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON.** Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15.

**CROYDON** meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: H. J. Wilson, 7, Cyril Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel.: Bexleyheath 1950.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6., (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.). Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

**GLASGOW** (City) meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW** (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 7th and 21st February, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. MacDougall, 42 Stoneyhurst Street, Possil Park, Glasgow, N.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road Met. Stn.). Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware, Middlesex.

**HIGH WYCOMBE** Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. L. H. Courtney, 53, Canonbury Park South, Islington, N.1.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 32, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 8th and 22nd February, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**ST. PANCRAS** meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o Head Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.9.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 607 Vol. 51 March, 1955

### THE LABOUR PARTY'S NEW LOOK

### FIFTY YEARS AGO

### PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

### DO IT YOURSELF

### THE PASSING SHOW

### MARXISM— A BRIEF REVIEW

Registered for transmission to  
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

## Jamaican Journeymen

Job-Seekers from the Isle of Sun and Poverty.

"This island excels the others for the goodness both of the Ayr, and bounty of the soyl, it is for the most part a plain and even country, yielding in great abundance whatever is necessary for Man's Life."

(A True Description of Jamaica, 1657.)

ON A JANUARY EVENING—very cold, as they say in the weather reports and with a touch of mist, a train from the South coast arrived at a main-line London station and sent its passengers tumbling and spreading onto the platform, then towards the barrier in a jumble of suit-cases and parcels, children and clothing. They were not the usual type of traveller. Their clothes were thin against the cold; many wore pyjamas as added protection, with towels around their necks and heads. Some sported wide-brimmed hats. A few came pathetically carrying stringed musical instruments. "You can always tell them," said the man leaning against the shuttered bookstall, "From a distance they haven't got any faces." Another batch of immigrants from the West Indies had come to London. It must, one thought, have been a pretty powerful Something to have brought them, the Caribbean sun still warm on their backs, to the bitterness of an English Winter.

It is impossible to accurately judge the number of Jamaicans who have recently arrived for, as British citizens, they are not compelled to register as aliens are. A reliable estimate puts the number of West Indians who came in 1954 at over 11,000—at the end of the year about 1,000 were arriving each month. 1955 is expected to bring another 15,000, most of them from Jamaica. These immigrants are living mainly in the large cities—Manchester (in Moss Side, an older part of the City), Birmingham, Coventry and London, where the Boroughs of Brixton and Paddington have taken a lot of them.

Whatever their qualifications, the Jamaicans are for the present content to take almost any job, so they mainly do unskilled work. Birmingham has nearly 300, and Oxford 20, working as 'bus conductors. The London Passenger Transport Board has employed some, but none for work in a 'bus crew. The Jamaicans are vulnerable to the rack-renter for they have come on to the end of a long waiting list for housing (in Birmingham, for example, it is 60,000) and they prefer to make their homes in areas where their countrymen are already living. The tendency to live together has hampered the Jamaican's absorption into the population at large; Birmingham is the only city to have tried to disperse them. Many

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are in overcrowded slums—some, it is said, owned by profiteering landlords who are themselves West Indians. The problem has aroused much concern; in Parliament it has provoked questions and a “ten-minute-rule” private member’s Bill. Several delegations from borough and city councils have been worrying the Colonial Office; it is even reported to have been discussed at a Cabinet meeting.

#### Jamaicans in Brixton

About 3,000 West Indians are living in the Borough of Lambeth, in South London. Most have taken homes in Brixton, packing themselves into Geneva Road and Somerleyton Road, where the houses are large and high and dowdy. To judge from the number of windows which at night are lit up, with the shadow of a dressing-table mirror thrown onto faded, pinned curtains, a lot of the houses have been divided into flats and bed-sitting



rooms. “For Sale—8 Lots Without Reserve” reads a notice outside one dusty looking residence. Is this, one wonders, the work of some rogue landlord?

On a wall in one of these roads someone has white-washed the slogan “Keep Brixton White.” The white-wash has been partly covered by brown paint and the weather has taken off some of the remainder. But the cool, menacing words are still just discernible and it is faintly sickening to read them in the lamplight. Yet from the evidence of a number of visits to Brixton, one would say that on the whole the Jamaicans are quite unobjectionable; as sober and as responsible in their behaviour and as modest in their bearing as anyone could wish. They have their mannerisms, it is true. In the local ‘pub’ (“Select Dining Room Upstairs”) they play darts with the regulars and to a man keep their hats on their heads. Some, like the two men who passed into the night discussing how to keep warm, walk as to some inner, throbbing music. But only the chronically irasci-

ble would object to such things. There are certain London streets which have the reputation of being “tough,” so that, it is said, the police always patrol them in pairs. That is a fairly reliable guide to the amount of civic disturbance habitually expected from any given neighbourhood. Along Geneva and Somerleyton Roads the policemen walk singly. Truth to tell, there are cat-calls to be heard in Brixton of a Saturday night, but they are from the local Teddy-boys and their flat-shoed girl friends, who as bearers of a white skin are exempt from having rude words written on walls about them.

#### Beautiful Jamaica

The Jamaicans come from an island in the Caribbean Sea—about 90 miles south of Cuba—which was discovered by Columbus in 1494 and called by him St. Jago, after the patron saint of Spain. This name was changed to the Indian *Xayamaca*, which means “Land of Wood and Water,” an allusion to the lush vegetation and many springs which give the island its beautiful scenery. *Xayamaca* later became corrupted to the present name of Jamaica. The island is about 4,400 square miles in area and has many luxuriant forests which furnish abundant dyestuffs and spices and some rare cabinet woods. The mean average temperature is 78° F., the best period being January to March, when in England we are treading the cities’ slush; Jamaica, of course, has its occasional earthquakes and hurricanes. Principal exports are bananas, sugar, rum (said to be the best in the world), raw coffee and cigars. An extensive fruit trade is carried on with Great Britain and New Zealand; deposits of bauxite (aluminium ore) are in development. Jamaica’s population, at 1½ million, is about twice that of Manchester; nearly one half of those working are in agriculture.

The island is a popular Winter holiday resort which attracts 120,000 vacationists each year, about 65% of them from America. Those lucky enough to arrive at the airport are greeted with a large glass of rum, presented with the compliments of the Sugar Manufacturers’ Association. Kingston, on the south coast, is the capital—it is an ugly city with some dense slums. The principal Jamaican newspaper is the *Daily Gleaner*, a well respected publication. Cricket is the islanders’ favourite game and when a Test match is being played at Sabina Park they cheerfully risk their necks at the tops of surrounding palm trees and houses to watch the game. Sometimes they are not so cheerful; they recently beat up the wife and child of an umpire who had adjudged a local hero to have lost his wicket when within reach of a century in a Test match.

#### Spaniards and Sugar

Spain held Jamaica, with the blessing of a Papal dispensation, during a century and a half of cruelty and neglect, not untypical of its time. Little was done to develop or protect Jamaica and when a mob of ill-armed and undisciplined Englishmen under Penn and Venables invaded the island in 1655 they met little resistance. The last Spaniard left in 1660, from Runaway Bay; the English conquest was recognised in the Treaty of Madrid (1670).

The Spaniards had introduced sugar to the West Indies from the Canary Islands; this industry is now the bedrock of Jamaica’s economy. The plantations, originally worked by slaves in the charge of the usually brutal

and corrupt overseers, at first flourished but later were subject to the changes of economic fortune. The early 18th Century was a time of low prices and depression but the slump was shaken off and by 1760 the industry had reached a high point of prosperity. Then, in the middle of the 19th Century came the competition of Cuban sugar and European beet sugar, and a further decline from which the West Indies have never really recovered. Beet sugar production is heavily subsidised for strategic reasons and in any case its refining is now no costlier for the United Kingdom than that of cane sugar at the Commonwealth price, so there is no weapon of cheapness to help the Jamaican planters. Cuban sugar is a strong competitor—75,000 tons were recently sold to Canada and it has an enviable protected market in the United States. West Indies sugar is to-day about 2% of the world’s crop; under the Commonwealth Sugar agreement of 1951—endorsed by the 1953 International Sugar Agreement—the islands are guaranteed an annual export quota of 670,000 tons, sold at a fixed price.

Before the war the United Kingdom and Canada stimulated the expansion of the West Indian sugar industry by granting preferential entry to its exports. This has caused the West Indies production to exceed its agreed world quota, at a time when the market is already over stocked. This year Canada and the United Kingdom will be taking all the sugar they need; any Jamaican surplus (expected to be about 50,000 tons) will have to make its own way in the unprotected world market, with no hope of breaking into the United States. This is not an attractive prospect for Jamaica—the world price of sugar has been depressed by the glut and is now considerably lower than the price at which she sells three-quarters of her crop to the United Kingdom.

#### Other Troubles

Jamaica has other troubles. Her citrus growers are threatened with extinction in face of competition from the U.S.A., Israel and Spain. Her cigar industry has been forced to contract drastically and lay off several hundred workers; this once again due to competition from Cuba. Mr. Bustamante, then Jamaica’s Chief Minister, came to London in May, 1953, to ask for help for her island’s ailing industries and to protest at the financial restrictions which force Jamaica to take 90%

of her imports from Britain but forbid her to buy in the cheap dollar markets. A West Indian trade delegation came in May last year to ask for guarantees for their exports of citrus fruits, bananas, rum and cigars. The Colonial Office was firm that “... it would not be possible to guarantee a market for the whole of West Indian export crops. . . .” This lofty refusal from Whitehall is partly due to the restrictions of Imperial Preference which the United Kingdom must enforce as a member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. For this reason the new government of Jamaica, led by Mr. Norman Manley, Q.C., is opposed to the British Commonwealth’s membership of G.A.T.T.

Any airline folder or shipping company brochure will show Jamaica as a glamorous tropical island with a history rich in the romance of Spanish treasure galleons, rum-soaked buccaneers and elegant plantation houses kept up by docile, whitely-grinning negroes. The other Jamaica, which the immigrants know, is an island of stark poverty, where 250,000 are unemployed, of a total working force of about 750,000. This is the colony with one of the worst standards of education in the British Empire, whose most troublous diseases are characteristic of its malnutrition and bad housing, hookworm, venereal disease, pulmonary tuberculosis and yaws (a skin complaint bred in dirty huts and carried by flies). Blindness is also a serious problem. Before the war a retired politician called Jamaica an Imperial slum and the description is as apt to-day; we can hardly blame the Jamaicans if, in the hope that things cannot possibly be worse elsewhere, they trust their luck in emigration.

#### Restrictions

It is likely that, given the choice, most of the Jamaicans would emigrate to the United States, but they are prevented by that country’s strict immigration laws. Restrictions also bar their going to Canada and Australia. England is about the only country which offers freedom of entry and a good chance of a job. With employment easy to find at the present, there is little general resentment against the Jamaicans; this might change if British industry is hit by a slump. Then the Jamaicans would discover that England has as many hardships for them as there are springs in their native island. And, as they already know, it is so much colder.

IVAN.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the “Socialist Standard,” March, 1905)

#### The Political Organisation of the Working Class

WHEN the worker has learnt his lesson; when he knows he must rely upon himself and upon his fellows what is he to do? How is he to apply his knowledge to matters of everyday importance to him? It is evidently futile for him to assert his independence of the other political factions if he is independently to strive for measures which those factions advocate. It is also useless for him to organise himself into a party which is unable to agree upon a working programme and a common line of action.

To us as Socialists it is clear that, the Liberals and the Tories having been thrown over as parties, the prin-

ciples for which they work must also be thrown over, and that, therefore, anyone holding the opinions either of Liberalism or of Toryism must be left outside the workers’ party. The party of the workers has interests which have no common bond with Liberalism or Toryism, and the party of the workers must, therefore, steer clear of anything which is in any way allied with these parties.

The political party of the workers must be the reflex of the economic interests of the workers who are the propertyless class, in the same way as the other parties reflect the economic interests of the propertied class. We are then driven to the necessity of searching for the economic interest of the worker. And this we find in the



principle that the working-class having created all the wealth of society are the rightful owners of that wealth. Every man should receive the product of his own labour, but as in modern society it is impossible to determine the portion which any individual adds to the value of the articles he helps to create, we must be content to let all those who labour remain joint owners of the aggregate product.

This, however, is not what obtains in modern society where the reverse is the case. In modern society to-day the non-producers of wealth are the joint owners of the aggregate amount of wealth produced. In this fact we have surely the true differentiation of the party of the workers from the party of the property-owners. And the first object of the political party of the workers, therefore, should be the securing for workers as a class the fruits of their own labour.

If they can only secure this they will have no need to worry about limiting the hours of work, securing a legal law of minimum, or returning to the *status quo ante* Taff Vale. These trifling matters will soon adjust themselves when the workers take as their own the product of their own labour. And resulting from this would come

the necessity of the present property-owners, unable longer to live on the fruits of other men's labour, working so as to secure their own livelihood.

#### English Hypocrisy and Russian Outrages

The huge wave of indignation that has lately been sweeping over the country on account of the massacres in Russia is typical of the hypocrisy of the capitalist-class and the ignorance of the man in the street. Big headlines and stirring articles have proved effective in arousing a strong and quite unjustified feeling against Russia. The English attitude towards Russian affairs has for long been intensely pharisaical, and its real origin, imperial and commercial jealousy in Asia, has been quite lost sight of by the public.

This feeling is quite unjustified from a capitalist point of view, and further it is only hypocritical, for no one, except a Socialist, can with honesty support the working-class in its efforts towards freedom. Yet we find the same people that would cheerfully starve out English strikers or shoot them down if more convenient that ignored the fearful outrages in Colorado, and that approved the recent shooting of strikers in Italy, pretending to be horrified at the actions of their fellow-capitalists in Russia!

### PARTY NEWS BRIEFS



**Ealing.** The drive to sell the SOCIALIST STANDARD continues though Christmas affected sales during December. The Branch Literature Committee has been content to maintain ground for the time being in preparation for an intense campaign to further increase circulation during May. The Committee again appeals to all members to come forward and lend a hand in this very rewarding work. In particular, we want members to distribute the STANDARD to our regular subscribers; this is work that anyone can do and will leave other members free to open up sales in new areas.

Several members of other Branches have recently taken part in these canvasses, and any others who would like to join in are quite welcome to do so. By this we do not mean to take members away from their own Branch activities in this direction. What we have found, however, is that some members are quite willing to "have a go" when they can go out with a fairly large bunch of members, but are reluctant to do the work on their own. The answer here, of course, is for every Branch to get its own group going—and the bigger the better!

Towards the end of January (too late for the report to be included in the February issue), another most suc-

cessful museum tour was arranged by the Branch Propaganda Committee; Comrade Kersley on this occasion conducted members round the National Gallery. Sixteen people turned up for a very interesting and instructive afternoon, and the proceedings were completed as usual by a social evening at a member's home.

Two other things which the Branch has tentatively in mind are the purchase of a printing press, linked with the idea of printing a small Branch news supplement for distribution periodically with the S.S. (this has still to be cleared with the E.C.), and the holding of lectures and/or classes using a film projector. The Branch Propaganda Committee is at present gathering information about this latter project and will soon be reporting to the Branch on it.

The Branch Propaganda Committee has also tentatively arranged for two propaganda trips to Southsea, in anticipation of a project mentioned last year for certain interested branches to run a co-ordinated series of meetings in this area during the coming summer.

It is not too early to remind Comrades that the Annual Conference is being held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 8th, 9th, and 10th. Business will commence each day at 11 a.m. An extensive agenda is anticipated so that work will commence promptly in order to conclude business. Branch Secretaries should see that their delegates' credentials are in order and at the Conference in good time.

The Social and Dance will be held on the Saturday evening and it is hoped to arrange a propaganda meeting on the Sunday evening.

Apart from increasing the sales of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, whilst canvassing the locality, the Ealing Branch members are introducing with success the Party's pamphlets. A list of pamphlets available at Head Office

is shown in this issue. Why not follow Ealing Branch's example and sell the Party's pamphlets.

Bloomsbury Branch meetings at Percy Street (The Forum Club) on Sunday evenings have proved very successful, and arrangements are in hand to continue these.

Head Office Sunday evening Lectures are being con-

tinued and several interesting topics are being dealt with. Members and sympathisers, particularly those living South of the Thames should do their best to attend these meetings, as there is ample room for a large audience. On Sunday, March 6th, the subject is "Industry since 1848" and there will be film illustrations. Comrades Kersley and Gilmac are the speakers.

P. H.

## DO IT YOURSELF

**Y**OU may look a long while, in this day and age, for a man who can grain woodwork or make up colours.

On the other hand, you can buy a gadget to reproduce the same knot of oak ad infinitum on your doors—and, in the same shop, take your choice from 999 shades ready for use. Even distemping ceilings, the trickiest job of all (though an old-time craftsman can do it with the table laid for tea) is child's play now: a patent roller and someone to hold the steps, and no brush marks either.

"Doing it yourself" is in vogue now. It is not a craze but the intensification of a trend—indeed, of several trends—since the war, and probably has not yet reached its climax. Six or seven years ago it was all rather tentative. The women's weeklies told how Jim and Daisy made dressing-tables from orange-boxes, the monthlies showed Victorian whatnots converted into genteel coffee-tables, and both were clearly catering for impecuniousness. Now the best people—Mr. Acheson and Miss Russell, for example—do it themselves, and in every magazine you can see the latest glamourpuss with the ironing-board she made.

The latest stage in "do it yourself" was introduced to Britain just before the end of last year. "Easi-Bild" patterns ("Trace on Wood, Saw and Assemble") range from flower-pot holders to three-bedroom houses (over 70,000 of the houses are reported to have been built in America). The patterns are marketed in this country by a firm concerned with small electric saws and drills. "Easi-Bild" has no monopoly, however. Another firm, which for 75 years has made beehives, now turns out furniture-making kits, with every part labelled for efficient assembly. After initially resisting "do it yourself," manufacturers surrendered to and have finally capitalized on it.

The origins of "do it yourself" largely lie in the economic circumstances of the war and after; certainly the fact, for example, that every man to-day is his own painter and decorator. People living in rented houses (that is, most people) had to do it themselves and ask their landlords for compensation, and the landlords quickly found it was cheaper to settle the tenants' bills for paint than pay professional decorators for labour as well. At the same time, the house-buying stratum of the working class—the self-styled "middle-class"—found its position declining. These were the people who before the war "had the decorators in"; after the war, they did it themselves. They had to.



The war also suspended a good many industries and gave small manufacturers a mild shot in the arm. While the furniture factories were making ammunition boxes and aircraft bodies, thousands of licences were issued for one-man woodwork businesses. The small electric motor of a quarter or half-horse power was the unit of constant capital for almost every one of them, its potentialities more widely appreciated than ever before. They made wooden parts of all sorts—lamp standards, table-legs, table-tops, chair-legs and so on; the market was good because timber was rationed, and it went on afterwards because the amateur wood-workers liked it that way.

Modern trends in design have contributed, too. The shape of furniture is dictated chiefly by the sort of houses it is going in. Over the past 25 years, houses have become progressively more compact and more uniform—see the huge post-war estates with their undistinguishable rows of little boxes. Furniture for them must be small and reticent: even the people who like the old-fashioned stuff find no space for it in a modern flat. Straight and simple design almost makes the suggestion, and the uniformity of "do it yourself" is only part of the general uniformity of modern living.

But the biggest factor of all in the growth of "do it yourself" is the decay of craftsmanship. The man who makes an "Easi-Bild" cabinet needs no knowledge or skill: he is merely the assembler, the last stage in a mass-production process. The essence of craftsmanship is understanding the relationship between tools and materials and their product. The old craftsmen kept their knowledge to themselves, and the dilution of labour in this century made them still more secretive: try to watch one at work, even to-day, and nine times out of



ten he will lay off and light a cigarette. Thus, through confidence that society would always need them, the craftsmen have helped the elimination of their own kind.

The mediaeval craftsman was aware of and handled his work as a whole piece. The village blacksmith designed as well as made intricate and graceful ironwork (cast iron finished him). The building mason's work ranged from drawings to the finished construction, not excluding sculpture; it remained so until the late 18th century, when the academically-trained architect took over and the craftsman became his tool. Woodworkers, coppersmiths—all of them knew their materials, planned their work and were masters of their tools. The tools sold for doing it yourself require no mastery. A recent magazine blurb says:

"Very few amateurs can bore a vertical hole in a piece of wood with a hand-drill; but with a power drill-stand they cannot bore out of line. How many men can cut half-a-dozen true half-inch strips off a piece of wood with a handsaw? A miniature saw-bench, driven by the quarter-inch drill, does it automatically."

It is, in fact, fool-proof—and craftsman-proof, too.

Before the division of labour stultified craftsmanship, the problem of leisure was unknown. The publicity for "do it yourself" has made much of its potentiality as a hobby—that is, a means of solving the problem. The article already quoted speaks of the numbers of people who get "more and more pleasure out of doing things with their own hands." Well, it could be so, but the statistics about hobbies suggest something different. The ones easily dominant are gardening for men, needlework and knitting for women; after them woodwork, decorating and car-tinkering, mingled with photography, sketching and the like. The position is pointed well enough by the authors of a recent survey:

"It is noticeable that most of the more popular hobbies are basically practical and utilitarian—they are primarily concerned with carrying on the business of life, even if they are also to some extent creative and recreational. Relatively few people take up any of the hobbies, such as music or photography, which have only an indirect practical application to the task of running a home."—T. Cauter and J. S. Downham: "The Communication of Ideas," 1954.

The truth is that amateur workmanship, like most other so-called hobbies, is more necessity than pleasure. It is not unlikely that some of its practitioners would much prefer a bit of reading.

Most amateur workmen are zealous, however. People who think that a bossless society is impossible are always pointing to the lazy men, the ones who won't do a fair day's work but want their dinners just the same. The amateur workman is one answer. It is not surprising that people should lack enthusiasm for work which is as monotonous as it is worthless—for example, making parts, never seeing the finished product, and knowing it is shoddy anyway. There is all the difference in the world between that and working for self and family—and the difference shows itself in attitude.

The sponsors of "do it yourself" have big plans. The electric-power tool firms reckon to have ten million home handymen in the foreseeable future in this country. As that means almost the entire adult male population, and as it equals the number of wirelesses and trebles the number of television sets at present in use, it seems rather unlikely. Nevertheless, "do it yourself" has grown fast and probably will continue to do so—not as a craze or a revival of handicraft, but as a new development of mass-production.

To talk of a revival of handicrafts is to talk anomalously. Ours is the age of mass-production and far-reaching specialization—the antitheses of crafts as they are known. The 19th-century handicraft movements, like William Morris's, sold their products to the wealthy; they could only do that, and so stood outside the real stream of production. It is not discrediting Morris to say that the demand for his things arose largely from the scarcity value of the hand-made when everything is being mass-produced.

Any man's lifetime to-day has seen incredible growth in the mechanization of work and leisure. In purely material terms—goods and amenities—the gain to mankind has been potential much more than actual. Modern capitalist civilization has a great show of facilities and a poor one of satisfactions, creating many needs but failing to fulfil them. Mass-production means the detailed division of labour; that in turn means unbridgeable gaps in human contacts. The nervous tension which characterizes our age is due only in part to the hurry of modern living. Far more, it is due to the frustration of ordinary human requirements. The basic act of any society is production, aiming at the satisfaction of human requirements: when it fails to do that, there is something wrong with the society. "Do it yourself" is an extension of mass-production for profit; what really matters is not the manner but the motive of production.

R. COSTER.

#### Correction

In the issue for February, Page 20, reference was made to a statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the varying levels of income. The total number of workers should have been given as over 25,000,000 (not 23,000,000), of whom only about one in four (26%) receive more than £9 12s. a week (£500 a year).

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1955

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## THE PASSING SHOW

### Background to Murder

Socialists maintain that crime is a social phenomenon. Criminals are not people who are "bad," but simply those whom social conditions have driven into anti-social behaviour. By far the greater part of the criminal codes of the world deal with offences which only exist where there is the institution of private property—offences such as stealing, forgery, and burglary; but the other crimes which civilised society prosecutes—crimes such as murder—even these are created by and grow out of the hatreds and tensions and inhumanity which have always accompanied the private ownership of property and the repressive forces which are necessary to defend it. Of course, these hatreds and tensions exist more strongly in some parts of the world than in others; where the profit system is more highly developed the greater will be the cleavages between man and man, and the higher will the crime-figures grow. Crime is also increased when immigrants from parts of the world where a peasant, small-cultivation form of society still lingers—such as rural Ireland and southern Italy—sud-



"But can't we just be burglars without any economic reasons Joe?"

denly find themselves in the vortex of rampant 20th century capitalism: such immigrants tend to accept the standards of the new society too wholeheartedly, and carry the philosophy of competition and hostility between every man and his neighbour to extremes.

Both these factors operate in New York, which is now the commercial capital of the Western world, and is the home of a large immigrant population.

### Human nature

The *Daily Express* (4-2-55) carries details of the report produced by Police Commissioner Adams concerning crime in New York in 1954. There are two murders a day in New York—about 730 a year. This may be compared with the 131 murders which were committed in the whole of England and Wales during 1953. Yet New York has a population of eight millions, while England and Wales have forty four millions. Allowing for

the difference in population, the murder rate in New York is on these figures more than 30 times as high as it is in England and Wales. The orthodox moralist can explain this tremendous disparity only by saying that there is 30 times as much "badness" in New York as there is in this country. But the contention that crime is caused by something innate in "human nature" looks very feeble beside these figures; for of every 30 murders which are produced by "sinful human nature" in New York, 29 disappear when the same "human nature" is considered in England.

Crime is an acute feature of private property society; in a Socialist society, it will vanish in the wake of those social conditions which gave it birth.

### Enter the "railway owners"

In the days before nationalisation the Labour Party encouraged the view that when the State took over an industry, we would all own it in common. And so easy is it to persuade people if you tell them an untruth often enough that even now, when we have had eight years' experience of railway nationalisation, you still hear stray voices repeating the same story.

John Connell wrote an article about the railways in the *Evening News*. It provoked some correspondence, and at least two of those who wrote in believed that they "owned" the railways (*Evening News*, 2-2-55). One of them said "We are the owners and should call the tune"; another began "As a joint railway owner with John Connell I heartily endorse his sentiments." What attributes of ownership do the writers of these letters possess over the British railway system? Can they ride on the railways without paying? Of course not. Can they sell them? The answer is the same. But they still proclaim that they "own" the railways with a fervour which bears witness to the fact that their gullibility exceeds their powers of simple observation.

### Cure-all corner

One expects politicians to make vaguely encouraging pronouncements from time to time; the world situation appears so serious that no doubt it is felt that the workers must be given suitable doses of encouragement periodically in order that they shall not lose hope entirely. But surely Mr. Attlee, in a speech reported in the *Daily Herald* on February 2nd, reaches a preposterous pitch of airy quixoticism.

He is said to have told a private meeting of Labour M.P.s that "total abolition of all weapons of war by all countries is the only ultimate hope of avoiding world destruction from the H-bomb." "He renewed the call for a conference between the heads of the major powers as a first step on the long road to negotiating disarmament." Just that. He ignores completely the fact that the capitalist system, which operates in every part of the world, Western or Soviet, has throughout its history devised more and more powerful weapons of destruction. He ignores the fact that the capitalist system of its very nature divides class from class and people from people, and creates dissension and strife wherever it rules. To believe that we can keep this capitalist system and

(Continued on page 41)



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

MARCH,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## THE LABOUR PARTY'S NEW LOOK

FOR some time the Labour Party has been in the doldrums, with meetings badly attended, and by-election polls swinging slightly in favour of the Tories; it seemed impossible for them to find issues that would revive enthusiasm. Meanwhile the Tory Ministers beat the big drum, and boast of industrial boom, expansion of production, exports and profits and the avoidance of war. One reason for the Labour Party's diminished drive is that, when in office, they had completed their welfare programme of Insurance and the Health Service and had nothing else to offer in that field. The political customers, the electors, were probably satisfied with what had been done but the same could not be said about the Labour Party's main plank, nationalisation. There were far too many people with far too many complaints and on balance the Tory who favours no more nationalisation is more likely to pull votes than is a Labourite who says there is plenty more to come.

This change of attitude in many electors led the Labour Party chiefs to avoid any firm commitment to introduce more nationalisation except the pledge to take over again the two denationalised industries, Road Transport and Steel. As Sir Hartley Shawcross, President of the Board of Trade in the Labour Government, put it in a speech at St. Helens in December last:

"Nationalisation for the sake of nationalisation was as dead as the dodo. The Labour Party should make it plain that they would nationalise only where it was necessary to protect the public from exploitation."

(Sunday Times, 19/12/54.)

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD March, 1955

Sir Hartley was making his contribution to his Party's anxious search for a new policy that will put them back in power. He called it giving Socialism "a new look" and told his audience, "it's no use turning back over our shoulders all the time at Karl Marx, and applying all sorts of restrictions, curbs and freezes." So he proposed the ending of "wage freezing and dividend limitation."

"If an industry can make good profits without exploiting the consumer—and I'd have a system of price control available in case of need to guard against that—good luck to it."

The reader will detect that whatever chance this "new look" has of winning seats for the Labour Party it doesn't look at all like Socialism. We may also be permitted to smile at Sir Hartley boldly breaking loose from "restrictions" and "curbs" in order to have in readiness "a system of price control"; and at the idea that Marx, who aimed at the abolition of the wages system, can be held responsible for the Labour Government's wage freeze.

But in his wish to get away from restrictions Sir Hartley fails to notice that the aims he proposes for the Labour Party are indistinguishable from those of any Tory candidate; and the one thing a political party's "new look" must be is to look different from the other party's. It is part of the present troubles of the two big parties that the voter cannot tell them apart, and Sir Hartley would make it worse. A Tory election agent recently reported on the state of mind of people in a north-western constituency and one of the points he made was that "people are tending to say 'It does not matter which party I vote for, they are both much the same.'" (Manchester Guardian, 23/12/54.)

It may be wondered why the Labour Party wants a new policy now, having compiled and issued its *Challenge to Britain* as recently as December, 1953. According to Mr. Wilfred Fienburgh, Labour M.P. for Islington, North, writing in the *Sunday Pictorial* (2/1/55) there was a bad miscalculation behind that programme.

"... the party programme 'Challenge to Britain' is out-of-date. It was written in expectation of the slump which the economists foretold. But the slump did not happen."

This recalls the story told by the late J. H. Thomas about his taking on the job of dealing with unemployment in the 1929 Labour Government. He had been told by a prominent economist that things were on the mend and unemployment would fall, when in fact the big crisis was just round the corner.

Mr. Fienburgh's idea of an alternative programme, now that the slump they counted on has been delayed, is that the Labour Party should do some hard thinking and devise a

"plan to translate boom into healthy prosperity. We must widen our trade with China and Eastern Europe before Germany and Japan pinch all the markets. The lower-paid workers, including the railwaymen, must be given a bigger share of the national well-being. There must be clear proposals for ending the monstrous inequalities of wealth."

(Sunday Pictorial, 2/1/55.)

Mr. Fienburgh's points deserve very brief comment. First there is "widening our trade," otherwise known as the capitalist scramble for markets. Twice before Germany and Japan had tried to "pinch" British capitalism's markets and twice Mr. Fienburgh's party found itself supporting the war about it.

About the inequality of wealth Mr. Fienburgh is forthright and we must surely believe that he and his Party

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD March, 1955

really do mean to do something about it; or rather any very simple person might be excused for believing so but for the fact that this monstrous state of affairs was left undisturbed during the six years the Labour Party were last in power.

He is not a regular *Sunday Pictorial* writer but was "filling in" for another Labour M.P., Mr. Richard Crossman, during the latter's absence abroad. Shortly after Mr. Crossman's return he found that the problem of the policy seekers had been solved, the necessary "new look" coming from Mr. Attlee.

"With two deft and unexpected strokes, Mr. Attlee last week reasserted his command of Labour in Parliament."

"He also gave his supporters in the country the lead for which they have been hungrily waiting throughout a series of disappointing by-elections."

The two strokes consisted of an attack on American policy on Formosa, and what Mr. Crossman calls a new "Socialist peace policy." Mr. Crossman summarises:—

"Mr. Attlee's pronouncements were nicely balanced for the purpose of achieving Socialist unity."

"His fierce attack on American policy and his drastic

## PASSING SHOW—continued from page 39

yet get rid of "all weapons of war" is to show oneself totally out of touch with reality. And yet the party which Mr. Attlee leads, the Labour Party, accuses the Socialist Party of being too unrealistic!

## Win with Wincott

A research worker called Mrs. Langley estimated that in 1946-7 "one per cent. of the persons aged 25 and over in England and Wales owned 50 per cent. of the total capital." Harold Wincott wrote an article in the *Financial Times* on January 25th quoting these figures; but he thinks that the position they reveal is nothing to worry about. He points out that one per cent. of the total population of England and Wales over 25 comes to 327,300; and he says "the average estate among the wealthy on these figures would appear to be about £45,000."

## 1848 TO 1955

## A Talk Delivered at the Showing of a Film at Head Office

TO many of you, what you have just seen, has no bearing at all on life and the world to-day.

The Socialist Party does not hold this view. A Socialist sees history as a process. The driving force behind this process is the changes in the method of wealth production, bringing new social classes to the helm of the State. What took place in the streets of Paris in 1848, was the final stage in the emancipation of the French capitalist class.

As always, the capitalists, desirous of democratic reforms to gain them exclusive political power, used the working class. This is why the February revolution so rapidly overthrew the Monarchy, because the whole of French society, except the landlords, supported it. Lavish in their promises to the workers, the capitalists, once they had control of the State, proceeded to feather their own nests in corrupt speculation. The workers soon found that the "Right to Work" was worth as much as any other right without power.

In six months their discontent reached fever-pitch in Paris. Paris was the one place in France where a large

criticism of conventional armies and Civil Defence must have come as a nasty shock to Mr. Morrison. But that shock was considerably softened by his firm declaration that Britain must make H-bombs and H-bombers until world disarmament is achieved.

"What Mr. Attlee has done, in fact, is to develop his own Socialist peace policy, behind which he hopes to unite the two wings of his Party."

"When this is done, British Labour can once again exert a decisive influence on world affairs and, incidentally, gather strength for the coming election."

(Sunday Pictorial, 6/2/55.)

In face of the above it is not necessary to labour the point that this new look is the same old dirty face of capitalism. Votes are to be won by exploiting anti-American feeling and by plugging a "Socialist peace policy" which consists of praying for disarmament and piling up H-bombs. Through all the suggestions, Shawcross, Fienburgh, Crossman and Attlee runs the same unspoken but explicitly accepted continuation of capitalism. Not for any of the four is "Socialism's New Look" to bear the slightest resemblance to Socialism.

which seems a very moderate fortune these days. You can make more money than that on the football pools any week." Which goes to show the importance of your point of view. If you are an Ellerman, a Dawson, a Clore, or apparently a Wincott, no doubt £45,000 seems "very moderate"; but to a property-less member of the working class, whose income is restricted by the boss to just that sum which will serve to keep him alive and efficient as a worker, and bring up his children to take his place when he is old—to such a person, Mr. Wincott £45,000 seems a very large fortune indeed. And what's that about football pools? "You" can make more than that any week? How curious that Mr. Wincott has not followed his own prescription, but is still under the regrettable necessity of making his living by writing articles defending the capitalist system.

JOSHUA.



Liberty and "Right to Work" promised in February became the prison cell and the forced labour gang in June.

In 1846 France was hit by a heavy economic crisis. After 1848 this was overcome and its passing saw the ebb of the revolutionary upheaval in Paris. But this was not the end. There was no lack of those anxious to exploit the new democracy. Most prominent was the nephew of the great Napoleon, Louis.

A president was to be elected for the Second Republic. By devious means Louis Napoleon got himself returned on December 10th, 1849. Eventually, he proclaimed himself Emperor, in December, 1851, just as his uncle had done, but with a different result. His war against Germany in 1870 lost him everything—and brought the Germans to the gates of Paris.

The working class of Paris, again turned to arms, "storming Heaven," this time with the National Guard and suffered an even greater defeat than in 1848.

Forty thousand were murdered in the streets by the troops of Thiers. The Third Republic was established; Paris crushed.

What conclusions do Socialists draw from these events. Fortunately, this job has been done for us by a founder of Modern Socialism, F. Engels.

One of the closest observers of the 1848 in Paris was Karl Marx, who was among persecuted democrats invited to enjoy the new-found freedom of the February Revolution. The fact that they invited him in, did not stop them chucking him out in 1849. Marx wrote two series of articles, *The Class Struggles in France* and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*.

These works are an attempt by Marx himself to explain the 1848 by the class interests of the contending forces. What interests us in the '48, at the moment, is not the remarkable knowledge shown by Marx of the intricacies of a bewildering political set-up, but the preface written by Engels nearly 50 years afterwards, setting forth the lessons Marx and himself had learned from the 1848 and the Commune.

He says that Marx and he had been proved wrong—"The mode of struggle of 1848 is today completely

## MORE ON ORWELL

GEORGE ORWELL is in the news. "1984," written in 1949 just before his death, and "Animal Farm" which he wrote in 1945—and for which he could not find a publisher whilst the war was still on—are now "best sellers." Quite recently T.V. audiences were subjected to the horrors of "Big Brother" and the torture chambers of the Ministry of Love (*Miniluv* in "New-speak") on their telecreens; and a film of "Animal Farm" is now running at a cinema in the West-End of London—complete with a less despairing ending! Other books by Orwell such as "The Road to Wigan Pier" and "Down and Out in London and Paris" have sold regularly for many years; although perhaps his last book, "Homage to Catalonia" is less well known. The reason for this is, no doubt, because he puts a view on the Spanish Civil War unpopular both to the Communists and the politicians of the Western Powers of the time.

obsolete.

"The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of unconscious masses, is past.

"Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organisation, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake.

"The history of the last fifty years has taught us that. But in order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long persistent work is required, and it is just this work which we are now pursuing, and with a success which drives the enemy to despair.

"Slow propaganda work and Parliamentary activity are being recognised here, too, as the most immediate tasks of the Party. We, the 'revolutionaries,' the 'rebels' are thriving far better on legal methods than on illegal methods and revolts.

"Our workers have used the franchise in a way which has paid them a thousand fold.

"The franchise has, in the words of the French Marxist programme, been transformed from a means of deception into an instrument of emancipation."

*Selected Writings, Karl Marx, 169 et seq.)*

That was written in March, 1895, 47 years after 1848.

Let us now rapidly turn the pages of history to 1904. In this year, a handful of Socialist workers came together in London to found a party based on the lessons of working class history. In its Declaration of Principles we read:

"That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic."

To-day, 51 years later, we see no evidence to refute these views.

There are some who think that these ideas, because they were said 50 years ago, must be wrong. It is our case that this proves them right.

HORATIO.

Why, then, is Orwell in vogue? Partly because he has a message for working people, and partly because his writings, particularly "1984" and "Animal Farm," can be used by the Western ruling class in its propaganda war with the Soviet Union, China and the Iron Curtain countries. To our local propagandists "Big Brother" and "Comrade Napoleon" represent a Stalin or Malenkov. But surely Orwell's message is that these totalitarian tendencies can and do exist in Britain, America, Spain and elsewhere. In fact anywhere that capitalist society with its coercive state structure exists; anywhere that private property, exploitation, and our so-called "welfare-warfare" system prevails.

Not only Soviet Russia but all countries have their secret and state police, their jails, and their laws protecting private property and exploitation of man by man. Russia has its M.V.D., Britain its M.I.5, America its

F.B.I.—and "1984" its Ministry of Love!

Orwell's telecreens and Party informers are not so fantastic either. Soviet Russia has long been the classic home of the informer; although the Soviet authorities have recently attacked the abuses of the system. And McCarthyism and the Un-American Activities Committee are well known to all Americans.

An important aspect of "1984" society is the three slogans of the Inner Party:—

WAR IS PEACE.

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY.

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.

This is the "double-think" of "1984." But is it much different from the double-think of 1955? Are we not

fighting for "democracy" in Malaya? Is not Spain one of the "free" nations of the West? Are not the Communists "fighting" for Peace? Is not "New China" a "Democratic" dictatorship? And so on.

George Orwell may not have been a Socialist but he understood more of the contradictions and tendencies of our present society than most people. And although not a "great writer he was able to pin-point these problems and tendencies in an interesting and popular way. In "1984" and "Animal Farm" he gives a warning to the apathetic, "couldn't care less" masses; unfortunately he has no answer to these problems and totalitarian tendencies in capitalist society. Only the Socialist has that.

PETER E. NEWELL.

## MARXISM — A BRIEF REVIEW

MARXISM is an outlook based upon certain fundamental propositions put forward by Karl Marx, just as Darwinism is an outlook based upon certain fundamental propositions put forward by Charles Darwin. In both instances the theories have been enriched and qualified in certain directions by subsequent information and investigation. Just as Darwin brought order into biological investigations so Marx brought order into social investigations. Darwin demonstrated that living forms evolve, and Marx demonstrated that social forms evolve.

Again, in both instances the theories were assailed from all sides but a great deal that they both put forward has become absorbed into accepted practice. Every writer of repute in biological fields seeks to explain living forms at any period by delving into those that existed before in order to see how the new ones came into existence. In like manner every writer of repute in sociological fields seeks to explain social forms by delving into the social organisation that preceded them and observing the changes that brought into being the new social form.

The idea of Socialism was in the air long before Marx wrote anything, but it was both indefinite and associated with experimental Communist colonies out of touch with the general conditions of life of the times. Marx brought the idea down to earth by his analysis of capitalism and of the forces within capitalism that made for change; the most important of these was an organised and understanding working class.

We will briefly examine some of Marx's fundamental propositions. First those concerning history, which are summed up in the materialist conception of history.

(1) That the economic foundations of a given society—the way the means of existence are produced and distributed—determines in general the relations between people and the outlook of the times, but that these conditions are themselves in process of change.

(2) That there has been a social evolution and each new society has grown out of the old due to the development of certain elements within the old.

(3) That history, since the advent of private property, has been the record of class struggles and that all class struggles are political struggles since they develop into struggles for control of the state.

Let us consider these propositions a little further.

We are living to-day in a world based upon capitalist

private property whose mainspring is buying and selling. Everything comes within the buying and selling orbit, even the things some people regard as most sacred. Consequently the relations between people, the laws, and the general outlook, are in harmony with this condition of things. Take some common examples. It is wrong to walk into your neighbour's house and walk out with a blanket if you are cold, or to bring something back from abroad without passing through the Customs, or to publish fabulous company returns, or to gamble with shareholders investments without instructions. All these are crimes in a capitalist social system; laws are framed to deal with them and punish the wrong-doer if he is caught. Yet in earlier social systems where there was little or no private property such crimes, laws, or social outlooks were unknown. Again, if a man walks off with another man's wife to-day he risks monetary damages—everything has a price. But if he did the same thing a few hundred years ago he would risk his life. Two thousand years ago if a surgeon made a bad job of an operation his hands were cut off, but if he did the same thing to-day again it would be a question of monetary damages.

Let us look at the question from another point of view.

In social systems of the past, where chattel slavery was the productive base, the idea of the mental inferiority of a large portion of the human race was taken for granted; the mental inferiority of the slave was accepted as a matter of course. Even the most outstanding thinkers of antiquity, men such as Aristotle, accepted this as ordained by nature. This was not because the freemen were fools or inhuman, but because the slave occupied the position of a beast of burden in the social fabric of the times, and without him that social fabric would have collapsed; the rich would not have had the means to build up their riches nor the philosophers the means to philosophise. The slaves performed the laborious tasks leaving the owners free to think and enjoy.

In the Southern States of North America, during the slave period, the slaves on many plantations were not deliberately treated with brutality by the owners of the plantations. It seemed natural to them that negroes were born with the mark of slavery upon their brow; they were bought and sold, whipped, and forced to live laborious days. Had this not taken place the plantations would



not have prospered, and it was that that governed the owner's outlook and conduct and drove him to fight bitterly for the retention of the system. It was to the interest of the plantation owner to retain the slave system, to increase the number of his slaves and to get as much out of them as possible.

Even to-day the colour question throws up an illustration of the effect of economic conditions in influencing outlook. The immigration of people from Jamaica is arousing more and more resentment in recent months. Why? Partly because they are occupying living space when the housing problem is acute; partly because workers here see in their coming in large numbers a threat to employment. The objections are not always put in that form, but that is what is behind most of the resentment of workers.

In the course of centuries different methods of producing and distributing the means to feed, clothe and shelter man have developed; each has thrown up its own particular forms of relations between people and its own particular outlook on the social world.

Since the advent of private property moral, intellectual and political ideas have been bound up with different forms of property ownership. These forms have split society into antagonistic classes which have engaged in bitter struggles, each class striving to dominate society and rearrange institutions to suit its own interests. History has been the history of these struggles, though they

have often been fought out under banners with fabulous designs—like the "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" of the French Revolutionary period; Caesar, Cromwell, Napoleon have been but tools of economic interests, representatives of epochs in these struggles.

The freeman and slave of antiquity looked upon the social world differently from the feudal lord and bondsman of the middle ages, and likewise capitalist and worker have different ideas from their feudal counterparts. The breakdown of production by chattel slavery was brought about by the growth of landholding in return for service, and the breakdown of feudalism was brought about by the growth of trading and the market, which invaded the close feudal system of mutual obligations.

To-day the work of production and distribution is accomplished by the working class, at least in the industrially advanced countries, and the same condition is spreading more and more completely all over the world. This is breeding in the minds of workers the conviction that, if they can produce for themselves as well as for an unproductive class that is living on their labour they should push this excrescence off and convert the whole of society into producers and consumers on an equal basis. In other words, establish a free social system out of the present oppressive and encumbered one.

GILMAC.

(To be continued)

## ATHEISM ON THE AIR

It would appear that in over 30 years of its existence the B.B.C. has never once permitted anybody to voice an opinion in favour of Atheism in any shape or form, until one evening in January when Mrs. Margaret Knight (lecturer in Psychology at Aberdeen University), was permitted to state in her broadcast on "Morality without Religion" that we should tell our children that we no longer believed in God although some people still do. She compared God with Santa Claus and referred to the Christian myths as useless for moral instruction. In her opinion if we taught children these biblical myths, when they grew up and learnt that they were at variance with the facts, they would be easy bait for Communism. The problem of evil was one point which she dealt with by declaring that an infinitely wise and all powerful God would not create evil. "If God cannot prevent evil then he is not all powerful, and if he will not, then he is not all good." The answer that many Christians give is that evil is man-made and nothing to do with God, or that its existence proves that man has departed from God. But here she said that there are a lot of evil things among the animals for which mankind certainly is not responsible. "The cat," she said, "takes delight in playing with a mouse and inflicting torture on it until the mouse dies after a long drawn out and painful death." The rest of the talk was about what she called "scientific humanism" and the education of children without the traditional religious beliefs.

The next day the Press was shocked and upset. The *News Chronicle's* leading article was headed "Atheism on the Air" in which it declared "Should she have been allowed to put and press her points without a balancing

exposition of Christian beliefs? That is where we think the B.B.C. went wrong." (14/1/55.)

Why this wonderful tolerant idea of a balancing exposition? Has not the B.B.C. been broadcasting religious beliefs for 30 years every day and often several times a day on all programmes and by thousands of exponents? Have they not a committee that on religious broadcasts see that we are all well soaked in traditional religious ideology?

Letters to the Press poured in by the thousand; such an hysterical outburst of injured religious pride has not been seen for a long time. Dr. Garbett (Archbishop of York) said that the B.B.C. had been used as a "nation-wide channel through which the speaker attempted to persuade parents to teach their children that belief in God might be compared to belief in Santa Claus." He told his congregation that "Christians had the right to demand that they be answered as soon as possible by some competent layman." Another divine, Father Joseph Christie, declared, "The primary reason for uneasiness is that the B.B.C. is a monopoly which has the power to sponsor this type of anti-religious propaganda without allowing the other side to be heard. Unless the corporation is prepared to allow competent speakers the same opportunities as Mrs. Knight, it must appear as favouring attacks of this nature." Dr. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's, a tolerant voice rather eclipsed by reaction stated, "It is surely a welcome sign that freedom of speech is still a reality." (*News Chronicle*, 17/1/55.) The facts have now proved that freedom of speech is not much to be seen.

What happened after this outburst? It resulted in a broadcast of a discussion between Mrs. Knight and

Mrs. Morton instead of only two talks which Mrs. Knight had arranged to give. In this latter discussion it must have been obvious to all who heard it that Mrs. Knight was rather like the aged Galileo who, in order to save his own life, had to go down on his knees before the Pope and inform him that the earth did not go round the sun as he first supposed. Mrs. Morton opened with a long harangue of the usual sentimental religious slush devoid of any reason. Mrs. Knight's defence was a climb down where she could have knocked her opponent for six, but did not. Such meaningless statements as "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son," were passed unchallenged. Did God love the world when, if we are to believe the Bible, he drowned almost the whole of mankind and also millions of innocent animals? That Christ came to bring peace to the world was also unchallenged. Christ himself said "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, for I come not to send peace but a sword, for I am come to set a man at variance against his father and a daughter against her mother." Matt. Ch X, ver 34. To which any scientific humanist might have added, "then how much better for humanity would it have been if he had stayed away!"

Mrs. Morton said that the whole teaching of the Bible was concerned with the teachings of this world and not the next world. This went unanswered by Mrs. Knight, when she might have declared that life after death, heaven and hell, is the main theme of the Bible.

What was it that caused the promising start of the first talk to be followed by such a dismal failure to answer the easy material of a religious devotee? Can it be that Mrs. Knight was victimised? After all she has a job as a member of the working class even if she is a

professor of psychology. She lives by the sale of her labour power to impart knowledge of psychology. She has to go to the senate, or governors of the university, cap in hand for employment, and so face the same economic conditions of all school teachers. Among those who are in a position to engage teachers are many hide bound orthodox conservative die hards restricted by Victorian prejudices. If it be true that "He controls my life who controls the means by which I live" then the explanation is clear. Universities teach theology and grant degrees in divinity, and it must have been very disturbing to the theological professors to hear that another university lecturer was debunking God. If many started to do this, then theology would rapidly decline and their jobs melt away. This, of course, is an important motive in the opposition. The church screamed out through its loudest mouthpiece, the Archbishops because they have the most to lose. Donald Soper reacted in a different way by declaring that Christians have the answer to all this, they need not be afraid. By capitalising this line he could score points against his competitors in the more orthodox sects.

The Materialist Conception of History can find wonderful examples in such religious conflicts on the air, and no doubt if we ever got so far as to get access to the air we should have to be replied to by the Labour Party, Communist Party, Liberal Party, Conservative Party, and several sections of the church. Religious intolerance is not dead, nor is there much freedom of speech on the air. With all the millions of words broadcast favouring these Biblical myths, it needs only a few sentences of honest doubt to cause an outburst of religious revivalism.

H. JARVIS.

## A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE

NO! We are not going to sport the mantle of the prophets. Neither shall we pay homage to Moses or the political wise-crackers of our time. We confess, however, that we are not lacking in imagination and appreciate highly this mental attribute.

For instance, we don't like the existing social order and this is to put it at its mildest. Nevertheless we don't propose to let our imagination wander wildly or to outline any new Jerusalem. We just sense the spirit of the time, desiring maybe to gently jostle, inspire perchance, those near enough to us, the sympathizer, the subscriber familiar with the cause we champion, to do a little mental stock-taking.

Whatever wishing there is to do, therefore, must represent something tangible, something within the bounds of possibility; something which has definite relationship to the times and circumstances of today in this year 1955.

We think it is possible for life to be much more agreeable, pleasant, than it is. The lot of the millions is not a happy one. There are quite a few, however, who are free from financial anxiety: they are secure, comfortable, well looked after. But even some of these fortunates (or otherwise) have their periods of anxiety. Top-ranking politicals are more than a bit scared, for example, regarding the future use, or misuse, of atomic energy.

We will leave these fortunate few to stew in their own anti-social juice, and bow to the working class with

the social problem which we wish to discuss. Some believe that it is still a battle of wits.

Is it not rather a battle of understanding and aims? There is today a conflict of economic interests between two distinct classes: the class who work and the class who "to" not, neither do they spin." It resolves itself into a struggle of wills, to get more and to resist on the part of those who are called upon to give.

How is the working class—the socially dispossessed—to develop the will which will establish them in control and possession of the necessities of life—the material essentials? Willing springs from the desire to achieve such an objective. The desire is cultivated and the will emerges and expresses itself politically for the establishment of Socialism.

But what are the cultivating processes? Surely nothing short of a serious investigation of the economic factors and political methods which make up world opinion today.

The "haves" are for ever begging the "have nots" to be satisfied, not to be so materialistic, to espouse the simple life, although they give it a wide berth themselves: the "haves" are the top dogs, live in luxury in their social kennels.

The simple life as such may have its merits but when it is accompanied by anxiety, insecurity, nerve-racking toll and ill-health—well, who wants it? It is reasonable for those who have any spirit at all to question the







## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP**—Secretary: R. Smith, 1, Littlejohn Street, Dundee. Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 9th and 23rd March, 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**HOUNSLOW**—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

**OLDHAM**—Group meets Wednesdays 2nd and 16th March, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

**ROMFORD**—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

**RUGBY**—Group meets alternate Mondays 7th and 21st March, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

**WATFORD**—Group meets alternate Thursdays 3rd and 17th March at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Road, (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

**GLASGOW MEETINGS**  
(City and Kelvingrove Branches)  
at  
**CENTRAL HALLS, BATH STREET**  
Sundays at 7.30 p.m.  
(Doors open 7 p.m.)

Mar. 6th. Subject to be announced.—J. HIGGINS.  
„ 13th. "British Road to Socialism."—R. REID.  
„ 20th. "Property and Poverty."—T. MULHERON.  
„ 27th. "Formosa."—J. RICHMOND.  
April 4th. "Ambitions and Success."—E. DARROCH.

**PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS**  
**PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2**  
Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

**PROPAGANDA MEETING AND PARTY RALLY**  
at  
**CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1.**  
on  
Sunday, April 10th, at 7 p.m.  
London and Provincial Speakers  
Title — "Man, Ideas, Revolution."

**SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.**  
Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist  
Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee  
at the Head Office or to a local branch.

**BOREHAM WOOD**  
Will members and sympathisers willing to  
cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood  
contact:  
I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,  
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY**. Correspondence to Secretary. c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m., 3rd and 17th March.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT**. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON**. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15.

**CROYDON** meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: H. J. Wilson, 7, Cyril Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel.: Bexleyheath 1950.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.). Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

**GLASGOW (City)** meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW (Kelvingrove)** meets alternate Mondays, 7th and 21st March, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. MacDougall, 42 Stoneyhurst Street, Possil Park, Glasgow, N.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road Met. Stn.). Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware, Middlesex.

**HIGH WYCOMBE** Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. L. H. Courtney, 53, Canonbury Park South, Islington, N.1.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 32, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 8th and 22nd March, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breaky, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. C. May, 1 Hanover Road, N.W.10.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**ST. PANCRAS** meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o. Head Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 608 Vol. 51 April, 1955

BEVAN AND THE LABOUR  
PARTY LEADERSHIP

RESOUNDING BRASS

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

FIFTY YEARS AGO

THE PASSING SHOW

THE SPOOR OF SPOOKS

Registered for transmission to  
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

4<sup>D</sup>

## There Need Be No War

ON THE SECOND OF LAST MONTH, a newspaper published a small map of Britain with a shadow across it. Sword-shaped, the shadow extended from west to east and beyond, its hilt in the Atlantic and its tip a hundred miles into the North Sea. It was the estimated radiation of a hydrogen bomb on Liverpool.

On the same day, the most celebrated statesman of our time had said to the House of Commons: "All these considerations lead me to believe that, on a broad view, the Soviets would be ill-advised to embark on major aggression within the next three or four years. . . . We may calculate, therefore, that world war will not break out within that time but if, at the end of that time, there should be a supreme conflict the weapons which I have described would be available to both sides and it would be folly to suppose they would not be used."

This, then, is what it has come to. The war dead of the last 40 years cannot be numbered, but they are tens of millions: here is the promise of the future. The enemy is named, the allies known, and the sand in the glass measured. "Each side at the outset," said Churchill, "will suffer what it dreads most—the loss of everything they have ever known." So the millions have died in "wars to end wars"; many would not have known what irony means, but it is carved on their memorials.

Has mankind reached the edge of a precipice? Is our civilization about to destroy itself, or be tumbled back to its beginning? Species have become extinct before now; rats could creditably inherit the earth, it is said. The push of a button can devastate a country; American scientists say a number "in the low hundreds" of hydrogen explosions would make human life impossible. To many people, it is a final notice served on humanity—nothing left but resignation to the inevitable.

Fatalism is one reaction, perhaps the most normal in a world where, apparently, rulers propose and rulers dispose. "Stop the bomb" is the other: protest, sign petitions, compel the rulers to outlaw the bomb. Incredibly, the other horrors of modern warfare have receded: the rockets, the gas and the high explosive have almost become acceptable. Incredibly, too, the prediction of war is scarcely questioned. No archduke has been shot, no small nation attacked, but the war is already there and the "major aggression" mere ritual.

Neither resignation nor protest answers the issue, however. The first, indeed, does not pretend to. It can be "Prepare to meet thy doom" or "Drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die"; either way, it is only an individual plea of impotency.



Nobody wants to meet his doom or die tomorrow—not even the people who have said they would rather be atomized than communized (as if that were really the choice). The fatalist in fact is an optimist, hoping without reason that the blind forces which somehow have led to the worst will somehow avoid it.

The case for “ban the bomb” is an obvious one—to avert the worst of horror and destruction. Or would it? The truth is that a modern war, long enough and fierce enough, can scourge the earth without nuclear fission. In 1937 “Things to Come” feebly depicted a world devastated, depopulated and barbarized by war, but its author knew nothing of the hydrogen bomb. That is not to minimize the power and danger of the bomb, but to keep in sight the fact that, if it were banned, the prospect would remain monstrous.

The hydrogen bomb is an effect of war—its product, its tool. Useless, therefore, to think of it as a preventive: no weapon yet has prevented war, no armaments race led to anything else. There can be no real assurance that an outlawed weapon will not be used. International laws have been broken often enough, and the worst of means used by desperate governments. Is anyone really impressed by the talk about “detering aggressors” and “only as reprisal”? It would be cold comfort for a million dead to know that five million should be killed in return. And on the other hand, it is not difficult to imagine the terror of the population on the side which used it first—waiting for reprisals.

There is only one answer. War is not inevitable: there need be no war. The power for peace does not lie with premiers and presidents, but in the hands of the great mass of ordinary people. For the understanding and the asking, a world without war can be theirs—that is, ours. The Socialist is often reproached for “impracticality,” for refusal to join in testing the limits of error. Yet now, when people see themselves at a crisis in human existence, his is the only practical answer—immediately, urgently practical. War means devastation and terror; abolish capitalism, and there can be no war.

What causes war? The immediate happenings are secondary: the little pigs’ houses disintegrated because they were absurdly built, not because the wolf huffed and puffed and blew. The conflict has been made before a shot is fired, and its source is unvarying in the modern world—industrial and commercial competition between the capitalist nations. Rivalry for investment areas, markets and trade routes—economic rivalry, in short—is the only cause of modern war. For forty years Britain struggled to retain the trade supremacy that was threatened by Germany; now the conflict between Russia and America, the outcome of spectacular economic growth, engulfs all others.

What has this to do with working people? Not much. The investments, the markets and the profits are the capitalists’: so are the rivalries. In their millions, working people are sent to kill one another—trained to destroy, and trained to hate, too. Peacetime, and they are exploited, often unwanted, often branded lazy, uncaring or stupid; wartime, and they are buttered up and blessed—defenders of freedom, the boys of the bulldog breed. The Socialist Party in 1914 affirmed this, and it is as true today:

“The question for the working class, then, is not that of British or German victory, since either event will leave

them wage-slaves living upon wages. Under German rule those wages cannot be reduced lower than under British, for every British working man knows that the masters who are shouting so loudly for us to go and die in defence of our shackles and their shekels, have left no stone unturned to force wages to the lowest possible limits. The question, then, before the workers is the abolition of the whole social system of which war and unemployment are integral parts, and the establishment of society upon the basis of common ownership of the means of production—the establishment, that is, of Socialism.”

Only Socialists can stand in this, the only realistic position. The other parties, committed to maintaining capitalism, are committed to war simply because war is an outcome of capitalism. Thus the Social-Democrats of all Europe, after swearing themselves blue that they would support no war, did so in 1914. Thus the Labour Party in Britain, “anti-militarist” in the thirties, supported the last war and the famous Labour leaders took on mobilizing labour and suppressing sedition. When it came to the point, they had to.

Opposition to war without understanding the real cause and the real remedy is meaningless and useless. Humane sentiment is admirable, but it remains a sentiment, and emotions which can be swayed one way are as easily swayed another. That is why war propaganda goes for people’s emotions. The university young men who resolved in 1933 never to fight for King and Country were only expressing a not-uncommon mood of pre-war days, and it is safe betting that few of them carried it out. As a present-day poet shrewdly puts it:

“Remember, the smell of burning will not sicken you,  
If they persuade you that it will thaw the world.”

It is worth noting the various parties’ reaction to the prospect of war. The Conservatives are solid for deterrent arming—bigger, better and bloodier. There were cheers in the House of Commons when Churchill, referring to the Russian dictatorship, said: “That is what we are bound to resist.” Conservative papers have headlined Britain’s nuclear strength, pressing home his ruthless doctrine: “Although you might kill millions of our people . . . we could, within a few hours of this outrage, certainly deliver several and, indeed, many times the weight of nuclear material which you have used, and continue retaliation on the same scale.”

The Labour Party differs only by speaking apologetically.

## MAY DAY RALLY

in  
**HYDE PARK**  
Sunday, 1st May — 3 p.m.

## MAY DAY PROPAGANDA MEETING

at  
**CONWAY HALL, RED LION  
SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1**  
Sunday, 1st May — 7 p.m.

All Welcome! Questions and Discussion

cally. Its amendment to the Government Statement assented that “it is necessary as a deterrent to aggression to rely on the threat of using thermo-nuclear weapons.” The *Manchester Guardian’s* editorial recently spoke of Labour’s “strong pacifist and humanitarian strains,” pinpointing the present dilemma of many Labour people. Supporting Aneurin Bevan will not solve it. The Liberal Party also prides itself for humanitarianism, but according to one of its vice-presidents, Mr. Philip Fothergill, “people who call on Britain to abandon the hydrogen bomb are promoting a policy which will add to the dangers of the situation rather than assist peace” (*News Chronicle*, 16th March).

As for the Communist Party, with its eternal specious Vicar-of-Bray sermon to the text of Russian policy—it has cried “Peace” louder and hollower than any of them. Its justification of Russia’s war preparations is, word for word, the British government’s justification of its own: the other side has asked for it, our nuclear armaments are to keep the peace, and so on. “The British Road to

Socialism” (1951) said: “A third world war, waged with atomic weapons, would annihilate our major cities, blot out millions of our population, and throw Britain back for centuries.” It is not mentioned that the “blotting out” would presumably be done by the “Socialists” of Russia! The Communist Party’s nationalisms have never allowed it to see that Socialists—real Socialists, that is—don’t kill other members of their class in wars.

None of these organizations can prevent war. The Socialist Party’s proposition is a simple, sound one. Working people in every country must recognize what is the only struggle of interest to them—the endeavour to abolish capitalism and establish Socialism. Capitalism causes wars because its basis is the private ownership of the means of living; under Socialism there can be no wars because its basis will be common ownership of the same means. The need for the spread of understanding, that is the only condition wanting, grows more urgent every day.

There need be no war!

R. COSTER.

## THE PASSING SHOW

### Fade Out

The editorial in *The Observer* of Sunday, February 20th, might stand as a classic example of how to get hold of the wrong end of the stick; or, putting it more formally, of how easy it is to draw incorrect conclusions from inaccurate premises. It is worth printing a lengthy excerpt from it:

“Without fuss or fanfare, we passed last week a significant milestone in the social and economic evolution of our democratic society.

“The Fleck Report on the organisation of the National Coal Board did not cause much stir. Yet here was a group of men led by the chairman of what the Socialist jargon of twenty years ago would have described as “the biggest citadel of monopoly capitalism” giving sound and sensible advice on the operation of one of the great socialised industries. . . . The whole incident has been accepted as perfectly normal and natural. Yet the political implication—which surely is that industry is not, after all, a major battleground in the class war—is still far from being recognised, let alone acknowledged, on either side of the political fence. . . . The Labour Party, meanwhile, has to reckon with the spectacle of Dr. Fleck, head of Imperial Chemical Industries—a giant combine on the list for further nationalisation—drawing on his capitalist experience to advise the Coal Board. It all sounds so friendly and impartial that the supposed fierce frontier between capitalist and socialised industry seems almost ready to fade away.”

### Sensation Over

What a pity that *The Observer* doesn’t live up to its name, and observe what is actually happening, instead of accepting what the propaganda organs of the great parties say is happening. If it had examined the economic realities, instead of blinding itself with the names which interested parties have chosen to give to those realities, it could have saved itself all this amazement. The Labour and Conservative parties both proclaim—the one approvingly, the other not—that the industries which are now run by State-appointed boards are examples of Socialism in operation. There is no evidence whatever to support this view. Do the members of society at large own either the raw materials or the finished products of these industries? They do not. Do the workers in these industries have free access to the instruments of produc-

tion? They do not. Does the chief end and aim of these industries remain the making of a profit. It does. Do these industries still purchase the labour-power of their workers for wages, and exploit those workers by not paying them the full value of what they produce? They do. Whatever test is chosen, our state-industries are revealed as soundly capitalist.

*The Observer*, however, apparently prefers to leave on one side the rational processes of thought, and to take the word of the Labourites and Conservatives for it. The state-industries, it echoes, are “socialised”: so there must be a “fierce frontier” between capitalist and “socialised” industries. And when occurrences such as the Fleck Report show clearly that there is no such frontier, *The Observer* cannot conceal its astonishment. But even then it fails to see the facts. Trying to extricate itself from the morass of confusion and inaccuracy into which it has fallen, it blunders into one of the most startling mis-statements which have come even out of Fleet Street for some time. “Industry,” it says, “is not, after all, a major battle-ground in the class war.”

### Enter Fairy Godmother

The class struggle is not an affair between this and that industry. It is (forgive us if we labour the obvious) a struggle between classes: the ruling class on the one hand, and the working class on the other. The ruling class is represented by the owners of industry, the large shareholders in private industry and those who hold compensation stocks in return for their former coal or railway shares, and the great managers (with their large salaries and company-owned cars and expense accounts) who run both private and state industry. In the development of capitalism in any one country it sometimes happens the basic industries—transport (railways and docks) communications, power (coal, electricity, gas), need to be built up quickly or renewed for the benefit of capitalist industry as a whole. It may happen that these basic industries require great capital investment, and that there is no prospect of their being able to pay dividends either on their present capital or on these new investments for



some time to come. In these circumstances the State, which is the instrument of the whole capitalist class, takes over the defaulting industry, itself guarantees the payment of dividends to the former shareholders, and advances sufficient funds to the industry to enable the necessary developments to take place. The State can afford to wait for its profits; the private shareholder cannot. The State, which is the creation of private property society, acts, as usual, in the role of all-protective fairy godmother to the interests of the ruling class. But the resulting State-owned industry has nothing to do with Socialism; the class struggle continues within it just as much as it does within privately-owned industry. Hence the periodic strikes in the coalmines and on the railways, and hence the surprise of people—like the editorial writer of *The Observer*—who thought that nationalisation was Socialism.

### Shudder as required

The Stationery Office has published a booklet for the Ministry of Defence called "Treatment of British Prisoners of War in Korea." The newspapers have taken the hint, and have written up the booklet to such an extent that few of their readers can have been left in any doubt as to the substance of what it contains. The *Sunday Express* (27-2-55) had its front page headline "This is Red Torture—Official," and above the headline was printed in large type, "A shudder will go round Britain today as the nation reads how the Communists treated our men in Korea." The *Express* here has given not only the result, but also the cause. For the Anglo-American bloc are at least for the present determined to defend Formosa and keep it for their puppet Chiang Kai-Shek, while the Chinese Government seems equally determined to conquer it. There is, therefore, the risk of war—if not an atomic war, then at least another so-called "small," Korean-type war. If this occurs, the British troops must go into battle feeling that the Chinese Mao-ists are inhumanly cruel. Every fact contained in the booklet may well be true; but its production at this particular moment of time is not merely a disinterested service to the cause of truth. For if the Mao-ists did these things to their prisoners-of-war during and after the Korean war, what atrocities must they not have committed during the long struggle against the Japanese which ended in 1945? The war against the Japanese was a struggle for all China, and the Mao-ists were in grave danger of total extinction; whereas the Korean war was only a fight for an outpost, and came after the Chinese revolutionaries had established themselves as masters of the entire mainland. Atrocities are much more likely to be committed by panic-stricken men than by troops triumphant and self-confident. But we have heard nothing of such atrocities against the Japanese; for the Chinese were then our allies.

### The time is inopportune

On the other hand, no official mention is now made of the German and Japanese atrocities during the last war—for these nations are now the allies of Britain in the prospective third world war. Indeed, last August Lord Russell, of Liverpool, a well-known lawyer, had to resign his post as Assistant Judge Advocate-General for persisting in the publication of a book he had written about the German atrocities in the late war (*The Times*,

12-8-54). No one denied that what he wrote in the book was true; he merely summarised in one volume information which was all taken from accepted histories of the period. What Lord Russell had forgotten was that our propaganda system requires the truth only about our present enemy—not about those who are now on our side. The attempted suppression of Lord Russell's book and the publication of the Ministry of Defence booklet are only two sides of the same policy. The allies of Britain must be glorified; her enemies must be blackened. Considerations of truth or falsehood take a secondary place to this over-riding object.

### Princess Margaret

*Picture Post* is sorry for Princess Margaret. It prints an article about her tour of the West Indies (26-5-55):

"If by any chance you think this Caribbean trip of Princess Margaret's is an escape into the sun, let me correct a false impression. This is work—a job undertaken because it is the duty of Royalty to undertake this kind of job. The Princess is a prisoner of her tour. She does a magnificent job—because it is her job. But there is a certain cruelty in the exactitude with which each moment of her day is calculated from dawn to night."

There is no doubt much force in these remarks, although there are compensations about a princess's life which *Picture Post* does not mention. One might even go further into the disadvantages of being a Royal personage. The Royal dukes and princesses are pursued constantly and untiringly by the Nosey Parkers of the Press, all seeking not fact but sensation. If Princess Margaret so much as speaks to any eligible bachelor between the ages of 20 and 40, the dailies and Sundays vie with each other to make painfully personal observations upon it. John Smith, perhaps, is in the princess's party at a night club or theatre; next day—and for days afterwards—the papers are filled with public speculation: Princess Margaret To Marry John Smith? The Duke of Kent goes to a party, and in the excitement puts his arm round a girl's shoulders: the *Sunday Express* publishes a photograph of this historic event (20-2-55), and follows it with lengthy personal details about the girl, the number of times the two have met, and so on. Princess Alexandra goes to stay with the Duke and Duchess of Abercorn in Northern Ireland. Ah! says some bright boy on the *Evening News* staff—they have a son who is an eligible husband! Unfortunately, it is discovered that the son in question is 600 miles or more away in Germany. Never mind! Journalistic enterprise can overcome drawbacks of this kind: the names of the two must be linked together somehow. So the gossip column runs: "Princess Alexandra . . . will miss the Dukes' son, the Marquess of Hamilton, who is another friend of the Princess's. He is serving with the Irish Guards in Germany." (*Evening News*, 17-2-55).

### Puppets and Puppeteers

Many people have commented on the various difficulties which beset the paths of Royalty. They go no further, however. They say what is wrong, but offer no solution. Their tears, it seems, are only of the crocodile variety. In contrast, the sympathy of the Socialist is practical. He not only sees what is wrong: he indicates a way to put it right. Our kings and queens, princes and princesses, are now paraded before us like so many puppets; puppets of the ruling class, exhibited to attract

the loyalty of the workers, and divert the attention of the latter from the conditions in which they live. In a Socialist society the Royal figures would, as such, cease to exist because there would no longer be any reason for

their existence. They would take their places as normal and useful members of society. And no doubt they would be much happier for it.

JOSHUA.

## The Bevan Business

### Bevan and the H-Bomb

Mr. Bevan's quarrel with Mr. Attlee in the House of Commons on 2 March, when he and some 60 other Labour M.P.s abstained from voting for an amendment that had been agreed beforehand at a meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party, was serious because of the number who followed Mr. Bevan's lead. The violence of the dispute certainly cannot be attributed to any wide gulf between the Bevan and Attlee standpoints on the H-bomb. Only a month earlier one of Mr. Bevan's principal supporters, Mr. R. Crossman, M.P., had not only supported the Attlee line in favour of making the H-bomb but had declared that this, along with the Attlee attack on American policy, had "reasserted his command of Labour in Parliament" and was "nicely balanced for the purpose of achieving Socialist unity." (*Sunday Pictorial*, 6-2-55). Mr. Bevan's revolt was as much a repudiation of Mr. Crossman as it was of Mr. Attlee. Mr. Bevan's reason for his action was that Mr. Attlee would not give a satisfactory answer to a question about the precise circumstances in which the Hydrogen bomb should be used. Mr. Bevan's question to Mr. Attlee was:—

"If the Russians invaded Europe with conventional weapons, would the Party officially support a government that counter-attacked with hydrogen bombs?" (*Daily Mail*, 3/3/55.)

But it must not be thought from this that Mr. Bevan is a pacifist or that he refuses to support war. His quarrels with Mr. Attlee have not been in that field. A correspondent writing in the *Manchester Guardian* (8-3-55) recalls that during World War II, when Attlee was in the National Government under Churchill, Bevan did indeed campaign against the government but it was for the early opening of the second front.

He was in the 1945-1951 Labour Government that built the Atom Bomb and that imposed peacetime conscription, for the first time in a 100 years. He supported the Korean war and the re-armament drive. He was Minister of Labour in March 1951 when the Ministry published a booklet "Wage Incentive Schemes," the Foreword of which urged the adoption of piece-work and other incentive schemes in order to reduce costs and increase output, the need for which "has become even more urgent in face of the unavoidable diversion of a substantial portion of the labour force to the carrying out of the Government's defence programme."

He said himself in June, 1951, "He did not believe in having no armies. . . ." (*Manchester Guardian*, 18/6/51.) And in an article in the *News Chronicle* (9/3/55) he admitted that in view of his past record he had no logical case against the hydrogen bomb:—

"Those of us who concurred in the making of the atom bomb and tolerated the saturation bombing of the last war have no moral or logical case against the hydrogen bomb. All three are methods and weapons of imprecision, that is, it is known they will destroy the civilian population and all the civil installations of the enemy."

What he asked therefore was that "we should pause

before carrying the logic of our past behaviour to its furthestmost extremities" (*News Chronicle*, 9/3/55). He wanted negotiations immediately with the Russians.

He also wanted, or so we may gather from his question to Mr. Attlee on 2 March, acceptance of the view that the hydrogen bomb will never be used by the British Government against an attack which itself does not include use of the hydrogen bomb.

As this is in effect an attempt to ensure that the next war will not be much more unpleasant than the last we are not grateful to Mr. Bevan and we don't think that his plea that he is being "practical" has been made out.

### Top Level Talks

One of the issues on which the Government, the Opposition, and the Bevanites, are in principle agreed though headily differing as to timing, is that of top-level talks between U.S.A., Russia and Britain, with the possible addition of China and France. They are all agreed that there should be such talks and that these should not be conducted by the professional diplomats, the Ambassadors, or even by Foreign Secretaries, but by heads of States, Eisenhower, Churchill and Bulganin. The idea behind the plan is that something for the good of humanity can be achieved at informal talks between heads of States that cannot be achieved at the United Nations, which was specially set up for "friendly talks," and that cannot be achieved by diplomats taking their orders from heads of States. None of the leaders who favour top level talks have so far explained what is the supposed





magic in them. And it isn't as if they have not been tried before. A century and a half ago Czar Alexander had "top level" talks with Napoleon and with the heads of the Prussian and Austrian States, and cooked up the notorious Concert of Europe, through which the ruling class in the different countries hoped to stifle revolutionary movements. It set the pattern for all subsequent international gatherings in that the protestations of mutual love and harmony were only the cover for projected double-crossing by the top-level participants. Do top-level talks stop war? In this generation we have had the example of the top-level talks between Chamberlain and Hitler at Munich which were the prelude to the 1939 war.

And the Press in mid-March was convulsed by the disclosure of what went on at some other top-level talks, those at Yalta in 1945. At those talks the three great Powers (except when two of them met to double-cross the absent one) were concerned in disposing of the world in much the same way as the Concert of Europe after the defeat of Napoleon and with as little foresight, wisdom and humanity. The *Daily Mail's* comment is typical of many in the British Press:—

"What we have read of the American version of the Yalta Conference leaves a nasty taste in the mouth. But why there should be any shock or astonishment at the disclosures of President Roosevelt's attitude we do not know. It is not news that he tried to 'gang up' with Stalin against Churchill. . . . His naïve belief that Stalin was a democratic idealist and Churchill a 'wicked imperialist' helped to bedevil the post-war world. We should have been safer today, and Communism less of a menace, but for that." (*Daily Mail*, 18/3/55.)

The attitude of Attlee, and even more that of Bevan, to the present proposal is particularly illogical. Their professed belief is that if Churchill meets the other two face to face the war threat may be dispersed, and that this is impossible or, at least much more difficult if they don't meet face to face. Do Attlee and Bevan believe that Churchill's charm may smooth away the friction between the Russian and American ruling groups and that Churchill, Eisenhower and Bulganin have qualities of wisdom denied to their deputies? If so this admiration

for the three leaders has been conspicuously absent from Attlee's and Bevan's speeches and writings. From these we had gathered that the continuance of Churchill as Prime Minister is a menace to the well-being of the population.

The belief in the likely fruitfulness of top-level talks plainly rests not on a substantial basis of logic or on happy results of past experience, but on the despairing feeling that we must clutch at this straw because there is no other hope left for humanity.

#### Bevan not a Socialist

Debating whether Bevan will succeed in winning over majority support in the Labour Party, the *Daily Mail* (16/3/55) concedes to him that he is "a dynamic figure, a powerful speaker, and the exponent of the pure doctrine of Socialism." The last claim is nonsense and we suspect that the *Daily Mail* leader writer knows it as well as we do. Mr. Bevan's alleged Socialism did not deter him, any more than it deterred the rest of the Labour leaders, from running British capitalism for six years after the war, with all that entailed from the use of troops in strikes to the preservation intact of the capitalist social structure. Only the muddle-headed think that the change over of certain industries from private to state capitalism has something to do with Socialism or affects in any way the structure or stability of capitalism or the wealth of the capitalist class. The *Manchester Guardian* (17/3/55) is nearer the mark in its assessment when it says that the attraction of the Bevanite movement

"lies in its beautiful sentimental vagueness. The Communist, the pacifist, the believer in the innate virtue of the Soviet State, the hater of American 'capitalism,' the general 'do-gooder,' all see something of themselves reflected in the glowing rhetoric of Mr. Bevan. Yet, as Mr. Attlee has pointed out, Mr. Bevan himself does not differ doctrinally from the official policy he condemns. But he appears to differ and that is enough."

He may be, as is claimed, a great orator in the Churchill class but if so it may still be true of him as he said of Churchill

"The mediocrity of his thinking is concealed by the majesty of his language." (*Daily Herald*, 3/3/55.)

H.

## THE AUSTRIAN ELECTION

### An Item Not Reported

THAT the discovery of a new and revolutionary source of energy, instead of being hailed as a boon and a blessing to men, should strike apprehension and fear into the hearts of the people and indeed justify predictions of evil consequences to humanity far worse than anything this generation has already experienced, just as, in spite of all technical progress and immense accumulation of wealth, poverty and insecurity should continue to harass the overwhelming mass of humanity who produce this plethora—these baffling contradictions should set all grown-up people everywhere seriously asking themselves the pertinent question: why this should be so? To find the cause of this paradoxical situation should form the principal subject of discussion among all serious-minded people.

Faced with the glaring failure of all "experts" on running society in the two hemispheres, the failure of statesmen of the "democratic" or the dictatorship

variety, of politicians and economists, of leaders of social and religious movements, etc., to provide any tenable explanation of the social paradoxes, seekers of the truth will have to brush aside as illusory and useless all these learned people's theories on social phenomena, current and conventional ideologies, and do some independent thinking, free from the poison of nationalism and the opium of religion.

No doubt, many workers have by now become at least suspicious, if not sick and tired of the old outworn but ever freshly furbished shibboleths and cliché slogans propagated through the daily press, the radio and the rest of the myriad channels controlled by the inexhaustible means at the disposal of the powers that be. At a recent election to some Austrian provincial governments and the Vienna City Council 121,000 voters either did not go to the poll or put invalid papers in the boxes. No Vienna daily paper had the courage to report that 82,000

voters wrote an unprintable rude, though historic quotation on their ballot papers.

More politely, our comrades and sympathisers handed in voting-papers with the following declaration printed on the very limited space available. It read:

"Voter is SOCIALIST, but cannot cast his vote for parties that are guilty of the gross misuse of the name of Socialism/Communism and of betrayal of the greatest cause not only of the working-class but of humanity in general. Experience has taught that the S.P.O. and the K.P. do NOT represent the revolutionary teaching of Socialism or Communism (i.e., the overthrow of the rule of capital with its money- and PROFIT-making system), but stand for the continuation of the present senseless and murderous order of society, which is responsible for poverty, insecurity and conflict between men, classes and nations.

"For the thousandfold proof of the correctness and the justification of our attitude, we refer to the scientific works of KARL MARX and FRIEDRICH ENGELS. After the experience of the ten years of war, and in view of a state of

affairs in which the spectre of a family catastrophe through unemployment, illness, and other vicissitudes of life under capitalism is constantly haunting the mass of working-class families; in view, further, of the more than ever threatening dilemma of present-day humanity, thanks to the progress in atomic arms production, the SWINDLE (and the bankruptcy) of the leaders and other representatives of the S.P.O. and the K.P. should be obvious even without a study of Marx's "Das Kapital."

"Therefore: War to the enemies and false friends of Socialism! War particularly to the leaders of the S.P. and the K.P., who stand, under the banner of Socialism, for the defence and preservation of capitalism with its wage-slavery!

"Long live the revolutionary aim of the Socialist workers! The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community."

The Press ignored these details of the polling.

R.

## RESOUNDING BRASS

THIS month, Billy Graham is back in Britain. The "ungifted preacher"—vide the *Manchester Guardian*—who is the world's most highly touted, highly paid evangelist, is after more souls to save. And this time, there are no cat-calls from Fleet Street, where they know the direction of the wind: little but praise for Billy Graham in 1955.

Last April, the SOCIALIST STANDARD commented on Billy Graham's evangelical campaign, which was taking place then in London. Describing one of the meetings and the parade of converts, we said:

"The trickle grew, until in ten minutes a good 300 stood in front of the pulpit. They were led away to have their names and addresses taken, presumably because the Crusade knows conversion is likely to be short-lived.

Most people want this life to be much better—and that is what Billy Graham claims to offer. Peace, happiness, contentment; accept the gospel, and these desirable conditions are yours. It is not surprising that people should be willing to try it, and it will be surprising if they have any luck."

Four months ago the *Evening Standard* published the results of a sample enquiry into the religious status of the converts, eight months afterwards. The sample covered 20 Anglican parishes, with a combined population of 420,000. Here are its findings.

"336 came forward at Harringay. That makes a fair sample of the Billy Graham total.

"226 of these were regular churchgoers before. That is, two-thirds. Only one-third (110) can be called converts.

"35 of the genuine converts are still going to the church of their choice. That is, about one on every three of the genuine converts."

The writer ends: "I conclude that Billy Graham's enduring effect on church attendances in London today is unimpressive."

C.





## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

APRIL,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## BEVAN AND THE LABOUR PARTY LEADERSHIP

**M**R. BEVAN has declared that what he said and did in the row that caused his censure was "not a challenge to the personal authority and position of Mr. Attlee as leader of the Party. Differences are on policy and only policy." (*Daily Herald*, 12/3/55.) As the Attlee and Bevan standpoints in the H-bomb debate in Parliament on March 2nd differed by only a hairs-breadth the statement is surprising; unless he was speaking of policy in general not just the H-bomb issue. And if that was intended to mean that Mr. Bevan does not aspire to the leadership it is hard to reconcile it with his views and behaviour. The Labour Party's policy and form of organization require a leader, and though the leader does not formulate policy he can and does exercise much influence on the policy votes at annual conference and in the Parliamentary party. Mr. Bevan believes that he has a policy different from that of the Labour Party's "Right-Wing" (as he now describes it), and his own description of the kind of leader the Labour Party ought to have bears a clear resemblance to himself. What then could be more natural than that he should seek to further his policy, side by side with becoming Party leader? Mr. Bevan, speaking while the Labour Government was still in office but after he had left it, depicted the kind of leaders required. They must, he said, be men of courage, guts and character; not experts or men from the "top drawer of society," but men "who had spent their lives in the Labour and trade union movement and who not only understood

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD April, 1955

Socialism with their heads but knew it with their hearts." (From a speech at Cumnock reported in the *Manchester Guardian*, 18 June, 1951.) From this it seems more than likely that he measured himself for the Party leadership and found it an admirable fit.

The opinion of a leader-writer in the *Manchester Guardian* (17/3/55) is that the difficulties began when Bevan failed to get the Chancellor of the Exchequer's job.

"It is just four years since Mr. Bevan began to show his displeasure that he had been passed over when the time came to choose a new Chancellor of the Exchequer. A little later he pranced out of the Labour Government. From that he passed on to organising his private group within the Party, and two and a half years ago was told (by 188 votes in the Parliamentary Party to 51) to disband it and to stop his attacks on his colleagues. Since then the story of the Parliamentary Labour Party has been of one long succession of disturbances connected with Bevanism."

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, April 1905)

## The Cry of the Workless

These results arise naturally from the conditions of employment to-day. The owners of property are ever on the look-out for means of augmenting their possessions. They employ their capital in industrial operations simply for the purpose of deriving from its use profit or interest. So long as they get their profits increased they care little for the conditions under which the work in their factory, in their mine, or on their railway is carried on. They never seek to know whether those working for them are living happy and contented lives. For them the worker is an abstraction—the materialisation of some portion of their capital in exactly the same way as another portion of their capital shows itself as raw material, as auxiliary material, as factory building, or as finished product. He sees the worker figuring on his periodical balance-sheet as "Wages," and cares nothing that "Wages" means so many sentient human beings capable of thinking, loving, functioning even as he does. Why then should he hesitate, when the markets are glutted, when his "wages" have been transformed into more goods than the market can consume, when goods cannot be sold because hungry men and women have not the wherewithal to buy food, when ill-clad children cannot have clothing provided for them because there is too much in the shops, to turn adrift those he no longer wishes to employ because they are no longer profitable?

And the result is invariably that, during periods when the markets are teeming with food and clothing, the workers are sent adrift and cannot purchase the things of which they are so sorely in need.

The only solution to this state of affairs is to abolish Capitalism. The whole trend of events is in the direction of Collectivist production and the inquirer into things political and economic can see that the capitalist, having ceased to be useful, is using the whole governmental machinery to safeguard the interests of his class.

The worker must learn that he has to look to himself and his fellows to work out the emancipation of the working-class. Only by combining to capture the political machinery and to use the power thus acquired for the overthrow of Capitalism can he hope to obtain, once and for all, a full and complete solution to the unemployed problem.

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD April, 1955

## FIVE MINUTES ON SOCIALISM—1

**T**O look at the world pattern of today is, to many, merely to look at not so much a picture but a crazy jumble of jig-saw pieces which do not fit together or resolve themselves into a comprehensive whole. The expert and the man in the street are equally mystified as to the method to be adopted to sort out the mess. Though the expert continues to manufacture devices and the man in the street may strive to follow his advice, nothing seems to work out for the better of everyone, everywhere, all the time.

Risking the charge of being presumptuous, the Socialist puts forward the statement that, understanding the nature of society, Socialists alone can create harmony from chaos, plenty from want and a full life for all rather than the futile husk of existence that the vast majority of the world's people undergo at the present time.

At the moment insecurity and possible annihilation seems to be the lot of the over and underprivileged alike and so it is that the Socialist message is for all who accept the classless, nationless, and exploitationless world that alone will bring mankind a greater measure of happiness than it has ever known before.

Like all movements that have and continue to affect society and the individual, Socialism contains a philosophy. Its philosophy is materialistic and though it may share its materialistic thought in some measure with other group-

ings, that are not otherwise Socialist, it cannot be associated with them in any other way.

Socialism, apart from its philosophic content is an economic theory and it is from an analysis of the methods by which men have conducted themselves in order to maintain their physical existence that Socialists have evolved the theory of historical materialism.

It can be said that the whole of the industrialized and civilized world carries on the business of living (and dying) in keeping with the economic basis of Capitalism; this, despite the fact that in some cases the national machinery of government proclaims to have eradicated Capitalism as in Russia or that it is in process of doing so as in China or in other cases where the nations' "leaders" claim that a mixture of Capitalism and Socialism is at work as in Britain.

Socialists in Britain and elsewhere in the world refute the idea that Socialism prevails in Russia or anywhere else, together with the inane assumption that Socialism can exist alongside Capitalism in any country. These two views are, among others, some of the things which distinguish Socialism from its imitators. We shall continue to discuss some of the features of the so-called Socialist economy of Russia and China in our next five minute talk.

W. BRAIN.

## THE SPOOR OF SPOOKS

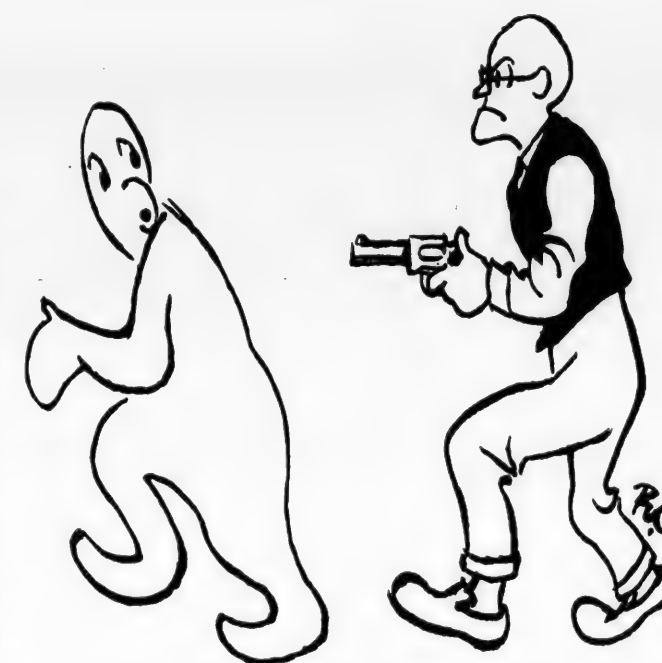
To those who enjoyed his "Natural History of Nonsense," the appearance of another book by Dr. Bergen Evans will be warmly welcomed.

His new book, "The Spoor of Spooks and Other Nonsense," is as its title shows really a continuation of the first. It is another onslaught on myths and superstitions, a further exposure of men's seemingly limitless credulity.

"Mysterious writings and rappings, rocking chairs that keep on rocking, wild rushings of the sun about the sky, roses that never fade, barrels that never run dry, coffee-pots ditto, leaves that grow pictures, statues that sweat and weep, abominable snowmen, corpses that stay fresh and fragrant for fifty years, horses that answer three questions for a dollar, flat tyres that repair themselves, monsters and sea serpents, half-ton stones that drag themselves across deserts, ghostly hitch-hikers who suddenly disappear and are later discovered to have been persons long dead—in news stories, in table talk, in radio and television interviews, from pulpit, press, rostrum, forum, microphone, street corner, classroom, bar and parlour, these stories descend upon us in an uninterrupted stream."

Every one of these items, he adds, has been presented within the past ten years, as a fact, in the newspapers and news magazines. All of them, with dozens more, come under his ruthless scrutiny, to be exposed and discredited.

Knowledge and wit are his weapons in the battle; scepticism and the scientific attitude his armour. And boldly inscribed on his banner is his motto "Let the Reader be Wary." Nothing nonsensical is too big or too small for him; nothing too important or too trivial; all are but different-sized reflections of men's refusal to see things as they are. In a lengthy and devastating attack on extrasensory perception and other theories of



Dr. Rhine, he still finds time to poke fun at "Lady Wonder," the talking horse that could answer three questions for a dollar! In the same way, he enlivens a difficult discussion on the theory of chance by recounting the story of the prudent midshipman in Marryat's "Peter Simple," who "stuck his head through a hole made in the ship by a cannon ball, on the assumption that the odds were overwhelmingly against another ball hitting the exact spot." But, adds the author, characteristically, the midshipman was not as prudent as he thought he was—he had the same chance of getting his head knocked off, in fact, wherever he had put it!

In most cases, however, Dr. Evans' method is to deal with groups of nonsensicalities loosely-arranged in



chapters under general headings. This lends itself easily to his technique of "setting-up and knocking-down" and his quickfire style of presentation. Not all the chapters are of equal quality; in particular, the last two dealing with the idiocies of the law, and especially American law, fall rather flat after the liveliness of the preceding pages. There is a good chapter on leaders and dictatorship, in which, among other things, he attacks the widely-held belief that dictatorships are efficient.

"All authoritarian political systems offer 'leadership,' and those who support them argue that they are at least efficient. They get things done!"

"This is untrue. The publication of Hitler's private conversations shows him to have been semi-literate, confused, and ignorant. The Nazi régime was riddled with corruption, cynicism, and inefficiency. Refugees got past his border guards by the thousands. Spies were set ashore in America in a ludicrously ill-contrived way. German invasion maps of England, when captured, turned out to be common Ordnance Survey maps, purchasable at any stationers for a few pence, and twenty years out of date, lacking new highways, bridges, by-paths and vital targets. . . .

"The myth of Fascist efficiency is fossilised in the endlessly repeated assurance that Mussolini 'made the trains run on time,' a phrase that implies that, whatever minor inconveniences the Fascist régime may have caused the Italians, it at least brought order.

"It didn't; it brought disaster and reduced the Italian people to beggary for generations to come. And the trains did not run on time!"

Worthy of special mention, finally, is a chapter, rather out of harmony with the rest of the book, in which he makes a vehement and bitter attack on the automobile "fetish" in America. This is a picture grim in the extreme, not relieved on this occasion by humour and light relief, but envenomed rather by an irony and a cold-blooded method of writing that transform it into

a horrifying indictment. The facts and figures he adduces are terrifying:—

"In the past forty years more than one million people have been killed by automobiles in the United States. This is almost twice as many as have been killed in all the wars in which we have ever engaged. Some fifteen to twenty million others have been injured, more than a million of them permanently disabled. This is twenty-six times as many as have been wounded in all the wars in which we have ever engaged. . . .

"Every sixteen minutes someone in the United States dies in a motor accident."

And so on, for 20 dreadful pages. Whatever light relief he dispenses in dealing with other follies of mankind, he allows none to intrude in his treatment of "auto-intoxication," as he calls it.

"The Spoor of Spooks," then, can be well recommended. It has deftness and lightness of touch; it is witty and very readable; and it belongs to that class of book that can be picked up and dipped into as the fancy pleases, or used, rather more consciously, as a "leavener" to heavier and more stodgy stuff. Nor, do we venture a guess, will any reader reach its last page without having at least one fondly-held delusion rudely shattered—even if he afterwards excuse himself by saying it was not particularly important. Such an excuse, we feel, would not impress Dr. Evans very much. For him, no doubt, anyone who can be taken in by small fallacies, and, even more important, defend those fallacies without knowledge of the full facts, is quite capable of being taken in by a big one. He may be overstressing things a little, but to all, Socialist and non-Socialist alike, we think he carries a valuable message—

Be Wary!

S.H.

## FOR WHAT IS THE LABOUR PARTY FIGHTING?

HAVING had six years in power running capitalism the Labour Party is on the outside looking around for a way to get back again. Now as it is not generally thought that the Labour Government merely ran capitalism let us explain what we mean by capitalism, in order to see if we are correct when we claim that the Labour Party is just another capitalist party.

Capitalism is the social system which exists today throughout the world, wherein the means of production and distribution are owned by a fraction of the people (the capitalist class, state or private) and the mass of people being without means of production MUST work for WAGES in order to live. Further the wealth of capitalist society (produced by the workers but not owned by them) is produced for SALE and PROFIT, that profit being the capitalists' loot from the exploitation of the class of employees. To sum up, the basic features of capitalism are—class ownership—wage labour, buying and selling and profit.

You will note we say class ownership not private enterprise, we say "state or private" because it is the basis we are concerned with not merely the form of administration. From the very start the Labour Party never sought to change the basis, to abolish capitalism, they merely proposed another form of administration. After six years in Government the whole ugly structure of capitalism remained intact, and still no proposal to abolish wages, buying and selling and class ownership is

forthcoming. The Labour Party has no horizons beyond those of capitalism and when all the schemes have been put into operation the position of the working class will be exactly the same. The past record of the Labour Party in supporting wars, freezing wages, breaking strikes, and forming coalitions, with Tories and Liberals, should be enough to finish them with the working class for keeps; the tragedy is that it won't.

### The Future

Now after three Labour Governments have come and gone, and nearly 50 years of "right-wing" leaders and "left-wing" leaders, and left-wing leaders becoming right-wing leaders, we are told by the *Daily Mirror* of a "fighting programme" for the next basin-full. After having in 1945 the largest Parliamentary majority of this century and after Mr. Garry Allighan telling us "this time there can be no alibis Labour has no alibi left, if it fails to produce the goods—full employment, all-round national prosperity, international concord, health, homes and happiness for the whole people—it can fall back on no excuse," (*Daily Mail*, 31st July, 1945) they are still (having accepted the idea of making H-bombs) going to have another crack if you let them.

In Hugh Gaitskell's article entitled "Fair shares— and how you can get them" he lays out a list of possible taxation adjustments which are supposed to provide "equal opportunity" and "a fair chance in life." Among

these proposals is "Turn the heat on the tax dodgers and the speculators. Collect more from the people who inherit big money—especially when they spend the capital." When he has elaborated on this theme of increased inheritance taxes rising "steeply above—say the £20,000 level," he tells us the whole thing is very precarious for we can't tax the rich too much or they won't have anything left to invest. His precise words were "but there's a lion in our path which must be chased off. Wealthy people already live too much on their capital. They will do it even more if evasion is stopped and death duties on the big estates are stepped up. This is bad for the country for it mops up savings that would otherwise pay for productive investment." Earlier on he informs us "in Britain today two-thirds of all our wealth is in the hands of only three per cent. of the population" (*Daily Mirror*, 1st March, 1955) and this is notwithstanding nationalisation and six years of Labour-governed capitalism. They are suddenly going to start attacking the rich when their first budget in 1945 heavily reduced Excess Profits Tax. The *Daily Express* (24th October, 1945) stated "Mr. Hugh Dalton's budget will please the City today for two reasons. First, his taxation concessions exceed the most optimistic City forecasts. Secondly, and equally important, he has not introduced any revolutionary new taxation."

### Fighting High Prices

In the *Daily Mirror* (3rd March, 1955) we were treated to a second article, this time from Harold Wilson. Before reeling off a list of time-honoured ways to deal with high prices Mr. Wilson recognises that the last Labour Government was kicked out on "the cost of living" question. He claims in trying to pardon his party's failure that "no party can say what will happen to the prices we have to pay in the markets of the world. In 1950/51 the world scramble for materials and food-stuffs was beyond the power of any British Government to control." This implies that in 1955 a British Government can "control" the scramble on the world markets, but then he goes straight on to say that the Conservatives who blamed the Labour Government "have now learned the facts of economic life. Every day we now hear them blaming world prices for the high cost of tea, meat and other essential foods." Capitalism, whose life depends on the scramble for markets, is the constant factor behind the problems of all governments. However, in face of all this, Mr. Wilson remains undaunted. He says "we shall use bulk purchase as a means of reducing the prices we have to pay abroad." Forgetting that this is just what they were doing when they were kicked out in 1951. There is to be no return to rationing, "we have pledged that by subsidies and other means there will be enough of the necessities of life for every family, without rationing by coupon—or BY THE PURSE." Apart from the fact that subsidies were designed to keep wages down and have never in the past provided "enough of the necessities of life" does Mr. Wilson seriously think that under the wages system the working class has ever been or can ever be without rationing "by the purse." Schemes for "price controls," schemes for protection against "monopolies," schemes for "utility furniture," schemes to stop scheming, we think Mr. Wilson himself could do with more knowledge of "the facts of economic life."

### That Old New Deal Again

On Friday, the 4th March, 1955, Arthur Deakin, Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, made his contribution to this "fighting programme." We

can dismiss most of what he said out of hand, for as a trade union leader who has lived to 64 to talk about 'REAL FAIR SHARES IN INDUSTRY' whilst an idle class owns the means of living shows he has not tumbled to what the class struggle is all about. A means must be found in future, he says, to prevent a worker feeling 'exploited and 'done out of' his share of what he produces." The whole idea of reconciling the classes of exploiters and exploited of getting them together and agreeing is as old as capitalism itself; strange it should come as the theme of one who is supposed to represent workers interests. "Workers who invest their labour in industry are as much share-holders as those who invest capital and are as much entitled to know what's going on." This would be laughable were it not so tragic. The workers do NOT invest ANYTHING, they sell a commodity, their labour power for a price known as a wage; as a class they have no stake whatever in industry and if, as they are always liable to, they get the sack they have not even got wages.

The shareholders Mr. Deakin are the capitalist class who own the factories, land, mines and transport, etc., and get a property income of rent, interest and profit from the wealth they legally rob from the workers. Socialism has nothing to do with shares of any kind, it means free access to what is produced, taking what we need because we COMMONLY own the means of production and there are no longer any classes. As opposed to the rat race for markets and profits which lead to wars, Socialism means a world wide free distribution of all things; there will be no "British" goods or "French" goods they will all be world goods commonly held by all and freely sent to and from on the basis of needs.

Throughout its existence the Labour Party has done everything but what needed doing most and said everything but what most needed saying. Although from time to time they paid lip-service by using Socialist sounding phrases when it met their purpose of deluding the workers, nothing they have ever said or done has advanced the workers one inch. While certain of their reforms might have helped in keeping workers contented and in staving off unrest, they have had the desired effect of giving the boss class a new lease of life. What would the capitalist class do without a Labour Party to patch up their vile system for them?

(To be continued)

H. B.

### The Late Comrade Lawson

By the passing of Comrade Lawson at the age of 78 years, the Party has lost another link with the history of its early days. A member of the Watford Branch, he was always willing to take his share in the work of propaganda, no matter what was asked of him, or when. Cycling to outlying districts, selling literature, opposition to speakers of other organisations, all activities came alike to him.

During the 1914-18 War he gave ungrudging help to many Party members who were in difficulties by reason of the Military Service Acts. He joined the Party in 1912. He was Watford Branch Secretary for years and his house was the rent-free branch room for many years.

Throughout the 43 years of his membership his enthusiasm for the Party and interest in its progress never flagged. For him the Party was part of existence. He was, indeed, a real comrade and true friend.

We mourn his passing and extend our deepest sympathy to his family.

T. KING.



## BLACK FELLOWS AND WHITE LIES

INCREASING racial tension in many parts of the world today has been the signal for some of our "public figures" to fan the flames of colour prejudice. If the commentator can also defend Christian beliefs, then he makes a double contribution to the preservation of the existing order, and his value as public opinion former is correspondingly enhanced. Probably some awareness of this was in the mind of George Murray, that chatty, if shallow, feature writer in the *Daily Mail* when he contributed two articles on the race question (20-21 January).

The theme of these two articles was the view expressed by Dr. Gilbert Murray that "there is a serious danger that the world might be swamped by the coloured non-Christian races, which would introduce a much lower moral standard of government." It was assumed throughout that what are loosely called the "whites" do have a moral standard of government worth preserving—which is a highly contentious assumption. However we may be better able to assess the seriousness of the danger if we examine the evidence and arguments given by George Murray.

"It is the white races who have always led the way, not only in discovery and invention but also in the realm of political and social ideas." This sweeping claim is certainly not borne out by the facts, though that is not to say that races other than white have led the way. As a matter of historical fact, the first civilisations were developed around the great watercourses, the Ganges, Euphrates, Nile and such like. That those early civilisations have long been surpassed in discovery and invention by societies in other parts of the world in no way detracts from their having "led the way" in their time. Possibly the inhabitants of those early civilisations could be considered white by comparison, say, with Negroes, but that is not usually what is meant by white races.

If one considers the dominance or advanced condition of a certain society at a given point in history there is no need to look to racial hypotheses for an explanation. Take the example of ancient Greece. Greek society attracted not only commerce from many distant lands, but also the most advanced thinkers and the material and intellectual inventions of the world. The same applies to the history of Paris, London or New York. None of these cities could have developed so prodigiously had their inhabitants been transported to Central Africa, Asia or Australia. The focal points of the world have moved their position with changes in methods of production and communication, and faded, not because of racial impurities, but because the world moved on.

The white races may have been "leading the way," but there is ample evidence that others are fast catching up. The development of world capitalism is steadily penetrating into the remaining primitive areas, and is producing a levelling off of the human race—a process that seems certain to continue.

### Holier Than Thou

On Christianity, George Murray was injudicious enough to write: "It is only under the influence of Christian civilisation that the worst excesses of other systems have been mitigated." He did not cite any examples of worst excesses, so we are left to imagine unspeakable horrors perpetrated by non-Christian barbarians. The records of history do show many instances

of such horrors—but they almost pale into insignificance by comparison with atrocities committed by some avowed Christians.

"Torquemada, who died in the conviction that he had given his best—indeed, his all—to the service of God... roasted alive ten thousand men and women with the sincere purpose of benefiting them and the human race... Charles V, who decreed that every heretic should be beheaded, burned or buried alive, and who put from fifty to a hundred thousand people to death in Holland alone, had as his supreme object the maintenance of true religion..."

"Read the expressions of Roman Catholic opinion in instigation and praise of the massacres of the Huguenots, the peans of exultation over the glorious and meritorious deed, the pious hopes that it might prove but the beginning of more extensive butcheries." (R. Briffault, *The Making of Humanity*.)

Whatever progress there has been in the mitigation of excesses, it has obviously not been due to the influence of Christian ideas.

Reverting to his other theme of the inferiority of the backward coloured peoples, George Murray wrote: "They are so steeped in ancient, inbred superstition that the witch-doctor is still the ruling influence in their lives. Are we to believe that such people are our equals—that they do not differ from us in any respect?"

Well, is it so difficult to believe that they are our equals? It is deplorable that superstition is so rife in their community but then so, unfortunately, it is in ours. True, we do not have witch doctors—we have faith-healers, astrologers, palmists.

Superstition, we may conclude, is cultural, not racial or inbred. It disappears to the extent that knowledge governs the conduct of human affairs.

### Are Races Equal?

George Murray then directs our attention to a World Health Organisation treatise *The African Mind in Health and Disease*:

"It says, with a wealth of scientific detail, that the average African brain is lighter than the average European brain. This is no proof that Africans are less intelligent. But it does show that we are not all built on the same pattern."

That, of course, shows us precisely nothing—it is on a par with the alleged fuel survey that showed people used more fuel in cold weather than hot. Everyone knows we are not all built alike (though they should also realise just how little human beings do vary, and how similarly they react in similar circumstances). But the point is: What leads to the supposition that your pattern is so different from mine and from others that we all cannot live co-operatively, harmoniously and on terms of social equality?

Many anthropologists find nothing leading to that supposition—on the contrary. In *Outline of Anthropology*, Jacobs and Stern write:

"That all populations today have the same complexity of structure of brain and central nervous system is decisive evidence in favour of the judgment that all races are potentially equal and that there are no genetically superior or inferior races."

and this from the UNESCO pamphlet "The Race Question":

"According to present knowledge, there is no proof that the groups of mankind differ in their innate mental characteristics, whether in respect of intelligence or temperament. The scientific evidence indicates that the range of mental capacities in all ethnic groups is much the same."

"All normal human beings are capable of learning to

share in a common life, to understand the nature of mutual service and reciprocity, and to respect social obligations and contracts. Such biological differences as exist between members of different ethnic groups have no relevance to the problems of social and political organisation, moral life and communication between human beings."

George Murray, however, prefers the "evidence" of Negro inferiority: "The W.H.O. monograph quotes many expert judgments, reached after long observation, showing that they are unstable and spasmodic, almost invariably dishonest, and inordinately vain, lacking staying-power, initiative, application and constructive ideas."

No doubt many Negroes do have these attributes. So do many white people. If the incidence of instability, dishonesty, etc., is greater among some populations than others, then, this is explained by their conditions of living. It is, for example, the most specious reasoning to support a policy of refusing employment to Negroes and then to complain that they are lazy. Members of subject groups who show initiative likely to be detrimental to the interests of their masters are commonly branded as trouble-makers, which is a strong deterrent to the development of initiative. Bearing these and other environmental factors in mind, the conclusions of Professor T. R. Garth, as set out in *Race Psychology*, appear to be much more soundly-based:

"It may be stated as a fact that races do not differ in sensory traits either qualitatively or quantitatively... Though much has been said popularly about personality due

to race, the studies so far made do not justify the belief that it exists... The conclusion then which must be drawn in the light of such scientific investigations as have been made is that there are no sure evidences of real racial differences in mental traits. While heredity operates according to laws, qualitatively considered, mental traits are distributed among all races, for all possess these human traits."

The superficial arguments advanced by people like George Murray in denial of race equality cannot stand up against the weight of evidence in support of it. Beliefs in the inequality of races have not been based on the result of scientific investigation; very few scientists have been willing to make any such generalisations. Strong race feelings are due to environment (which is alterable), and not to heredity. It is interesting to note that young children of all races are apparently free from feelings of hatred or even mild dislike for persons of another race until they have learned the lesson of prejudice from their elders.

There are still, unfortunately, many people who, not knowing how to express their revulsion at the evils of present society, find scapegoats in men of different skin colour. It is the task of the Socialist to help expose the myths of racism and, indeed, all the doctrines of social inequality. On the positive side, this is part of the process of establishing a society of equitarian, harmonious and co-operative relationships.

S.R.P.

## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

**Conference—a brief reminder.** Business commences at 11 a.m. each day (Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 8th, 9th, and 10th), at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London. Social and Reunion Dance will be held on the Saturday evening and the Party Rally and propaganda meeting is on the Sunday, commencing at 7 p.m. sharp. A film, "1848" will be shown during the evening. Fuller details are given elsewhere in this issue.

**Party Literature.** It will be readily acknowledged that a most forceful means of propaganda is through the written word and it is very pleasing indeed that so many branches are making such progress in selling the SOCIALIST STANDARD and Party pamphlets through canvassing. Ealing Branch's activities have been mentioned from time to time and two other branches have given a brief report of their work in this direction.

Camberwell Branch report that their canvassing drive has continued to show encouraging results. Although during the winter months no new ground has been covered, six dozen SOCIALIST STANDARDS have been distributed each month to regular readers. The members find that people like to discuss what they have read, and although time is limited for long discussion, one reader has been along to the Branch and two others have promised to try and get along. The original three canvassers have been joined by two other Comrades. If the support continues, which seems likely, plans are being made to boost the local readership considerably during the summer months. The Branch has found that canvassing is a good alternative method of propagating the Party's message during the winter months, when outdoor meetings are limited due to bad weather. East Street meetings, however, have been held when weather has permitted. When they have a settled regular number of readers of the STANDARD the

Branch proposes to introduce the WESTERN SOCIALIST and Party pamphlets.

**Ealing Branch.** All arrangements have now been made for the special canvassing drive to herald the opening of the summer propaganda season. Eight canvasses are going to be held, and new areas in Hounslow and Stonebridge Park are to be tried. Full details of time and place for the canvasses will be printed in the May S.S. and all Branch members are asked to do their utmost in support of the campaign. Members of other Branches who would also like to give their assistance will be warmly welcomed. This is really worthwhile and rewarding work in a field where the overwhelming majority of our contacts have never even heard of us prior to taking the STANDARD.

**Bradford Branch,** although few in numbers, have been working very hard for some months now and have made Dewsbury their centre for canvassing. They have 10 or 12 regular readers of the STANDARD. This is a very good result, especially as the Branch members are not many in number and they live in widespread districts.

### FROM THE LITERATURE CANVASSING COMMITTEE

A few short weeks will see the arrival of May and (we hope) the likelihood of better weather. All branches are therefore urged to seize the opportunity of increasing the number of regular subscribers to this journal by conducting a large scale, intensive canvassing drive throughout the month.

Since the formation of the committee, a number of branches have adopted this very useful activity with encouraging results, and with the passing of the winter lull, we shall be redoubling our efforts to stimulate interest



in canvassing.

Has your branch had a visit from us? If not, grant us a few minutes of one of your business meetings, so that we can try to persuade you, and offer our help. We are a *working body* with experience in the activity we advocate and are always prepared to give every assistance.

Enquiries, please, to the literature canvassing committee at head office.

Glasgow (City and Kelvingrove Branches) have a very full programme ahead. A debate is arranged with a representative of the Federal Union to take place at Central Halls on Sunday 17th April and another debate is likely to take place with a representative of the Woodside Liberal Association, this will probably be on May 2nd. (Details later). The usual May Day Rally will be held

## THE CHURCHES SPEAK ON THE H-BOMB

SOME people who are mistrustful of the motives, judgment, humanity or sense of responsibility of politicians ask us to consider how much better it would be to listen to the voice of religion. The H-bomb gives us an opportunity, for several churchmen have told us what they think.

### The Church of England

"The 80-year-old Archbishop of York, Dr. Cyril Garbett, yesterday gave unfaltering Christian support to the Great Deterrent and to Britain's decision to make the H-bomb. A tense House of Lords heard one of the Primate's most impressive speeches. He spoke as though still emerging from a moral dilemma.

"For he explained that he recognised tremendous power in the argument of those who thought an H-bomb to be morally wrong. 'It makes an agonising challenge to conscience,' he said.

"Then with sudden firmness, he declared: 'The possession of the bomb seems to me to be, at the moment, the one possibility of preserving peace in the years immediately ahead. It would be madness to close the door to this possibility.'

"But fear by itself was a frail and temporary deterrent. The bomb must become the shield to a bold, courageous policy of seeking genuine peace.

"The Lords, who had just begun a two-day defence debate, heard Dr. Garbett cry with fervour and passion: 'I hate and detest the making of these hateful weapons. I would to God they had never been made.'

"To our statesmen he sent this message about their work for peace: 'I hope they will be prepared to take great risks, that they will be patient in rebuttals and misunderstanding.'" (Daily Mail, 17/3/55.)

### The Catholic Church

"The choice between peace and war did not rest with the winner of the arms race, for no lasting peace could ever be based upon fear, said Cardinal Griffin, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, yesterday. He was preaching in Westminster Cathedral.

"Speaking of Britain's decision to make the hydrogen bomb, he said that, strictly speaking, it was a strategic issue rather than a new moral problem. Our allies had had this weapon at their disposal for some time.

"Ever since the first hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific there had been grave fears lest a new weapon should have been brought into existence, the effects of which were, at present at least, beyond human control. If this was so, the use of the hydrogen bomb as a weapon of war would seem to conflict with our well-tried principles of the past.

"The problem rests on whether this bomb can ever be brought sufficiently under control that, given a just war, it can be directed only against unjust and violent aggressors. The answer to this must lie with those who have access to

at Queen's Park from 3 p.m., when it is hoped a London speaker will join the Glasgow speaker on the platform.

Glasgow Branches will be giving fuller details in the May STANDARD regarding a week-end school to be held in Glasgow on the 7th and 8th May.

**May Day in London.** The Party is arranging the usual Hyde Park Meeting during the afternoon of Sunday, 1st May, when as many Comrades as possible are urgently needed to sell literature and generally support the meeting. Full details are available at Head Office. In the evening a meeting is being held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. For full details see page in this issue.

P.H.

the necessary scientific knowledge." (Daily Telegraph, 14/3/55.)

### The Methodists

"A call for a halt in the development of the H-bomb was made by the President of the Methodist Conference (the Rev. W. Russell Shearer) in a statement issued in London yesterday.

"He said: 'Christians have every right to proclaim that the use of the H-bomb is completely indefensible and have no right to maintain silence.'" (News Chronicle, 17/3/55.)

It will be seen that the Christian religion does not lead its various groups of believers to adopt a common-inspired, standpoint. Their declarations differ from each other and each conforms to one or other of the attitudes already declared by the political leaders, from Churchill and Attlee to Sir Richard Acland.

### CORRECTION

In March issue, page 42, sixth line from bottom in "More on Orwell" read "best" instead of "last."

### DEWSBURY

To readers of the SOCIALIST STANDARD in Dewsbury. Bradford and District Branch meets regularly at 728, Leeds Road, Shaw Cross, Dewsbury, for discussion. April meetings will be held on Sundays, 3rd and 24th April at 3.30 p.m. Sympathisers are very welcome.

### PAMPHLETS

"The Socialist Party and War"	1/- (Post free 1/2)
"Russia Since 1917"	1/- " " 1/2
"The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years"	1/- " " 1/2
"The Racial Problem—A Socialist Analysis"	1/- " " 1/2
"Socialism"	4d. " " 6d.
"Socialism or Federal Union?"	4d. " " 6d.
"The Socialist Party: Its Principles and Policy"	4d. " " 6d.
"Is Labour Government the Way to Socialism?"	4d. " " 6d.
"Nationalisation or Socialism?"	6d. " " 8d.

All obtainable from the Literature Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

### OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS			
Hyde Park	...	3 p.m.	
East Street (Walworth)	April 3rd	12.30	
	" 10th	11 a.m.	
	" 17th	12.30	
	" 24th	11 a.m.	
	May 1st	12.30	
Whitstone Pond (Hampstead)	...	11.30 a.m.	
WEDNESDAYS			
Gloucester Road Station	...	8 p.m.	
FRIDAYS			
Station Road, Ilford	8 p.m. (From 6th May)		
Earls Court Station	...	8 p.m.	
SATURDAYS			
Jolly Butchers Hill	...	8 p.m. (From 16th April)	
Rushcroft Road, Brixton	...	8 p.m. (From 9th April)	

### HACKNEY BRANCH LECTURES

at

CO-OP HALL, 197, MARE STREET, HACKNEY, E.8.

Monday, April 18th. "The Post-War Development of Capitalism."—E. WILMOTT.

Monday, May 2nd. "Religion and the Materialist Conception of History."—W. KERR.

Both meetings at 8 p.m.

### EXHIBITION AT HEAD OFFICE

on

May 20th, 21st and 22nd.

"THE PARIS COMMUNE 1871."

Original Posters, Books and Pamphlets.  
(Fuller details in May "Socialist Standard")

### SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at

52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET

(Clapham North or Clapham Common Tube Stations)  
Regular Sunday evening lectures are held each Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

April 10th. No Meeting.

" 17th. "Analysis of Post-War Capitalism."—E. WILMOTT.

" 24th. Debate—"Evolution v. Creation." For S.P.G.B.—H. JARVIS.  
For Jehovah's Witnesses.—W. WATSON.

May 1st. No Meeting.

### DEBATE AT HEAD OFFICE

Sunday, April 24th, at 7.30 p.m.

"EVOLUTION v. CREATION."

For S.P.G.B.—H. JARVIS.

For Jehovah's Witnesses.—W. WATSON.

### DARTFORD LECTURES

at

LABOUR CLUB, LOWFIELD STREET, DARTFORD  
Friday, 13th May

"Literature and Materialist Conception of History"—R. COSTER

### DOCUMENTARY FILM

"1848—French Revolution"

CO-OP HALL, 129, SEVEN SISTERS ROAD, N.7  
(Near Finsbury Park Station, Piccadilly Line)  
Wednesday, 27th April at 8 p.m.



## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP**—Secretary: R. Smith, 1, Littlejohn Street, Dundee. Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 6th and 20th April, 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**HOUNSLOW**—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Tel: phone: 7625 Hou.

**OLDHAM**—Group meets Wednesdays 13th and 27th April, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

**ROMFORD**—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

**RUGBY**—Group meets alternate Mondays 4th and 18th April, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY**. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m., 7th and 21st April.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT**. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON**. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15.

**CROYDON** meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: H. J. Wilson, 7, Cyril Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel.: Bexleyheath 1950.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCELES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6., (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.). Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

**GLASGOW** (City) meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW** (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 4th and 18th April, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. MacDougall, 42 Stoneyhurst Street, Possil Park Glasgow, N.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware, Middlesex.

**HIGH WYCOMBE** Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. L. H. Courtney, 53, Canonbury Park South, Islington, N.1.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 5th and 19th April, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. C. May, 1 Hanover Road, N.W.10.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**ST. PANCRAS** meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o H. ad Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.9.30 p.m., at Khavayam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Ess.x. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eitham, S.E.9.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1955

at

**CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE  
LONDON, W.C.1.**

on

**Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 8th, 9th, 10th**

Proceedings commence each day at 11 a.m.

## Conference Social and Dance

at

**Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.**

on

**SATURDAY, APRIL 9th, at 7.30 p.m.**

Tickets 3/-

**PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS  
PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2  
Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.**

## PROPAGANDA MEETING AND PARTY RALLY

at

**CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1.**

on

**Sunday, April 10th, at 7 p.m.**

**London and Provincial Speakers**

**Title — "Men, Ideas, Revolution."**

also

**FILM — "1848"**



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 609 Vol. 51 May, 1955

### CRIME AND PRISON REFORMERS

### A CHEQUE FOR CUPID

### PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

### FIFTY YEARS AGO

### TEN YEARS AFTER

### ANTARCTICA 1910 : 1955

Registered for transmission to  
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

4<sup>D</sup>

## The First of May

"Then turn, and be not alarm'd O Libertad  
—turn your undying face,  
To where the future, greater than all the past,  
Is swiftly, surely preparing for you."  
WALT WHITMAN.

IT IS SIXTY-FIVE YEARS since half a million people poured through London, "an interminable array with multitudinous banners," on the first International May Day. No celebration, no insubstantial pageant this: column upon threadbare column they came, signifying and expressing labour's strength and labour's aspirations, with an eight-hour day as their rallying call. For sixty-five years it has continued, but the columns are smaller now. And the eight-hour day? They have it and, so generous is life to the working class, work overtime.

May Day is workers' day, the day of our class. However hollow the cries and futile the demonstrations, it remains the anniversary of protest, a continual reminder of exploitation and subjection. "Class" is the reason and the theme of May Day—class in its fullest, truest sense. The working class is not the labourers or the artisans or the machine-minders: it is *all* people to whom wages are life. The working class is international: so is its cause. Among the cries and chants and slogans of May Day, only one has meaning: "Workers of all countries unite!"

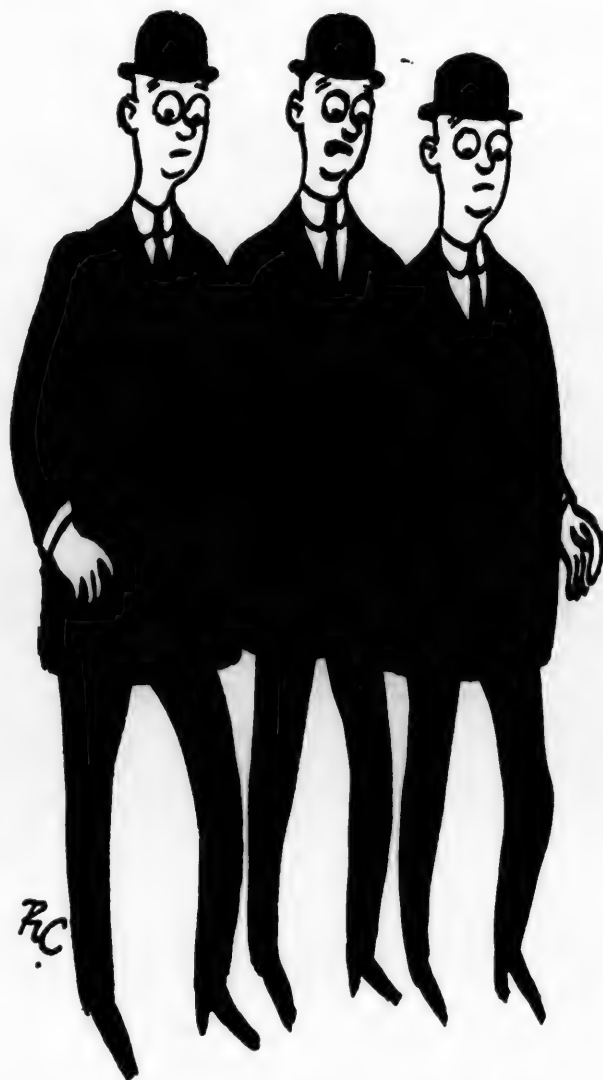
Class consciousness was never more needed than now. Sixty-five years have seen war, dereliction, fear and disaster; today mankind is under a shadow without precedent. The working people of the world have it in their hands to end poverty, fear, hatred and war. Nationalism is not their interest but their rulers'; submission is taught, not conceived. That is where the tragedy of the May Day processions lies. The hundreds of thousands who paraded their rights in 1890 lined the streets again seven years later, still threadbare, still of one mind—to cheer and wave streamers for their Queen.

To the Socialist, class-consciousness is the breaking-down of all barriers to understanding. Without it, militancy means nothing. The conflict between the classes is more than a struggle for each to gain from the other: it is the division which reaches across all others. The class-conscious working man knows where he stands in society. His interests are opposed at every point to those of the capitalist class; his cause can only be the cause of revolution for the abolishing of classes. Without that understanding, militancy can mean little. It is not mere preamble that the Socialist Party's principles open by stating the class division in capitalism: it is the all-important basis from which the rest must follow.



For nearly fifty-one years the Socialist Party has addressed its case to the working class on May Day, demanding not support but understanding. In those years, it has seen movements rise and fall, heard slogans die away, known panaceas acclaimed and discarded. In 1904, the great working-class party was the I.L.P.; now, the giant is a pantaloons. The Labour Party was not yet formed; now, it is torn by its members' disillusionment. Incredibly, they tell the Socialist he is impractical: impractical, when through their denial of what the Socialist knows they have fallen, and with them the hopes of millions!

The Socialist Party's proposition is the *only* practical one. Class-conscious people need no leaders. The single, simple fact which all working people have to learn



"Damm socialists'd have us all looking alike, they would."

is that capitalism causes capitalism's problems, so that the remedy—the only remedy—is to abolish capitalism. In that knowledge they must take hold of the powers of government—for one purpose only: that the rule of class by class shall end. Socialism is not a benevolently-administered capitalism: it is a different social system.

Can the working class do that? He who doubts needs only look round him. The wonders and the splendours of modern civilization all are made by the working class. The knowledge, the skill, the perception are theirs—often, indeed, unwanted by the capitalist to whom trash is the soul of profit. Often, too, wanted for destruction: see the boy taught mathematics who has fine judgment, that he may drop bombs.

Reform is no answer, even though at times—rare

times—it benefits working people. The reformer (he may not know it) has not even set out to change the world; he has agreed that capitalism shall continue, and is merely trying to alleviate its worst effects. Has poverty—extreme, dire poverty—been abolished by the reformers? Ask the old; ask the public assistance cases or the slum dwellers or the sick. Has life been made more satisfying by the Welfare State? Ask the thousands snatching at Billy Graham's promise of peace, joy and contentment.

From the beginning, the Socialist Party has been intractable in its opposition to reformists. Working class action, in fact, must be revolutionary. That is the real message of May Day, for people all over the world. The workers of Britain have common cause with the workers of every other country. They are members of an international class, faced with the same problems, holding the same interests once they are conscious of them. There is only one way of realizing those interests: the immense productive powers of the world must become the common property of every man, woman and child.

"Common ownership" is part of the definition of Socialism, but it is not an end in itself; rather is it a beginning, a condition. Private ownership by the capitalist class of the means of life is the condition of all that is deplored today—the wars, the poverty and the rest; that is why, without abolishing that ownership, there can be no solution to those problems. And in the same way, the common ownership of the means of life is the condition of another sort of world. The system so based would be incapable of causing wars, incapable of producing want.

The need for Socialism grows more urgent each day. It awaits the conscious will of the workers of the world, and nothing more; when they desire it, it can be. In the clamour of rivalry between factions and nations, the voice of the Socialist is a small one, but it must be heard. Exploitation and conflict must be ended; the catastrophe of worker killing worker must be prevented. Fifty-one years ago a small group of working people made plans for a new era in human history—today, more than ever before, it is vital necessity.

May Day has come again. Let it be an occasion of fresh resolve. There are many who are with us but not of us. The struggle for Socialism is a long and arduous one, needing the help of every class-conscious man and woman. On this day, then, we urge the need to work for Socialism within the Socialist Party. To spread Socialist understanding is the great task of our time: every fresh adherent to the Socialist Party Principles is another step towards the emancipation of mankind.

R. COSTER.

#### READ ALSO—

#### THE WESTERN SOCIALIST

*The Journal of Scientific Socialism in the Western Hemisphere. Published jointly by the W.S.P. of the United States and the Socialist Party of Canada.*

Per Issue 6d. (Post free 7½d.)

Postal Subscription Rate:

6 Issues 3/9; 12 Issues 7/6

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," May, 1905)

### A Travesty of Trade Unionism

A correspondent sends a packet of literature explanatory of the objects and methods of the Railway Clerks' Association. It is claimed that this Association will serve to secure some betterment of the conditions of clerical workers on railways. It is a Trade Union for railway clerks.

Now a trade union is an organisation rendered necessary by the pressure of the capitalist or exploiting class upon the class they employ and exploit—the working class. This pressure is the result of the constant endeavour of the capitalist-class to squeeze ever greater profits from the labour of the working-class, and expresses itself in the prolongation of working-hours, in the reduction of wages, or if an increase of hours or a reduction of wages are not possible, in the maintenance of both in, so far as is possible, a stationary condition, irrespective of the increase in the productivity of labour.

In exercising this pressure the capitalist-class are but functioning as a class of exploiters whose wealth is derived solely from the labour of those they exploit. In combining in a Trade Union to prevent, if possible, any reduction of their standard of comfort, any hardening of their conditions of life, or to obtain, where practicable, some larger share of the wealth they create, the working-class are but taking the precautionary defensive or aggressive measures natural to an exploited class.

The capitalist-class are fighting to increase or maintain their powers and privileges; and as these can only be maintained or increased at the expense of the working-class, their greatest concern is to keep the latter in subjection; to prevent them improving their position, except in-so-far as that improvement is necessary to capitalists. On the other hand, the working-class are fighting for the best conditions they can get; to improve those conditions

if possible, and to prevent them being adversely affected in any event. And as they cannot improve their position, or for that matter maintain it, except in opposition to and at the expense of, the class above them, they are in necessary conflict with that class.

Obviously then, the antagonism of interest existing between these two classes must prevent any inter-mingling except in conflict. It would be absurd for the officers of one army to be in the innermost councils of the other. Hitherto, although the working-class combined in English Trade Unions have been very far from conscious of their class interests, a sense of hostility has kept them from fraternising with their natural enemies to the point of admitting them to an intimate acquaintanceship with the internal affairs of their fighting organisations.

The idea of employers being admitted to membership of Workers' Unions has ever appealed to the most hard-headed, hide-bound and mentally atrophied trade unionist as absurd—and the clearer the comprehension of class-interests, the greater the growth of class-consciousness among the working-class, the more grotesque must the idea appear.

How then may we designate the working-class organisation that, coming into existence at a time when the antagonism of interests between the classes was too sharply defined to escape the notice of any man with an eye to see, yet admitted to the domination of its affairs, the representatives of the very class it came into existence, ostensibly, to fight. The Trade Union of the clerical workers of the railways of the United Kingdom (the Railway Clerks' Association) has done this. Its President and Vice-Presidents are of the capitalist-class, several of them company directors, with at least one railway company director.

## A CHEQUE FOR CUPID

IN our world, you get nothing for nothing; which is another way of saying that everything is done for profit under capitalism. That extends to more things than just food, clothing and shelter; prestige, beauty, culture (at any rate, its appearances) can all be had for a price. And, with a steadily rising number of customers, affection is available too. The modern marriage agency might well take for its motto Shakespeare's apostrophe to money—"O thou touch of hearts!"

The oldest of the matrimonial agencies is *The Matrimonial Post*, established 1860; the youngest, and the best-known, is Heather Jenner's Marriage Bureau, and there are perhaps a dozen others. Their claims are difficult to relate: thus, *The Matrimonial Times* argues "a larger circulation than any other matrimonial paper," but *The Matrimonial Post* bids better with "a larger circulation than all the matrimonial papers in the world combined." These are monthly papers devoted exclusively to advertisements of their clients' requirements, which is one way of doing it. The other sort of agency, like Heather Jenner's, does its business by interview.

All marriage agencies supply an enrolment form which makes it clear to the applicant that flirtations are out: "... with the idea of Marriage only, and not Friendship," warns the *Matrimonial Post*. The applicant must describe himself fully: age, height, colouring, religion, occupation, income, capital and, on one form, if Musical what instrument. Farther down, he lists his requirements, including "figure." The fees vary considerably. *The Matrimonial Times* is comparatively cheap: a fee of ten guineas will bring introductions "until finally suited, without any further fees or charges under any pretext whatsoever, or bonuses expected when married." Heather Jenner, on the other hand, charges five guineas for enrolment and another 20 guineas from each partner after the wedding.

Most clients are bachelors and spinsters, with a comparatively small proportion of widows, widowers and divorcees. The latter obviously start with a handicap. Some advertisers in the marriage papers specify "not divorcee" (another not uncommon is "not R.C."), and most divorcees announce themselves as having been peti-



tioners only. The advertisements are of anything from 50 to a 150 words, and are explicit about personal qualities possessed and required. Most claim a sense of humour and an affectionate nature, and most ask for somebody "home-loving." Here and there are obvious plums, like the 36-year-old Army officer with an income of £1,400 "which he is rather tired of devoting mainly to his own ends and would like to share with a quiet girl of particularly good appearance."

Sex does not enter much into it; in her book, *Marriage is My Business*, Miss Jenner confirms: "the question of sex rarely arises in our business." It seems unlikely that philanderers would patronize marriage agencies, in any case. Some advertisers ask for somebody "broadminded," but generally, a strong morality pervades the matrimonial papers. The majority of the advertisers mention their religious outlooks and, as has been mentioned, divorcees are difficult. It is worth mentioning that marriage agencies generally have had favourable mention from the clergy, and that a "matrimonial bureau" was one of General Booth's schemes in *In Darkest England*.

Most clients of the marriage agencies are fairly well-to-do. It is obvious enough that most young working men and women could not afford the fees. Miss Jenner says: "We work mainly with the middle and upper classes." Advertisers in the *Matrimonial Post* and the *Matrimonial Times* seem mainly to be small business men, chartered accountants, managers and so on, with a fair sprinkling of retired men. The spinsters are almost entirely professional women—secretaries, nurses, teachers, etc.



Before the war, marriage agencies were little heard of and considered as something of a joke. Today they are used much more—and, surprisingly, by young people. Bear in mind, of course, that they remain the province of the comparatively well-off. Most industrial and commercial workers meet enough people and marry off fairly quickly. Among the "middle class," however, it is a different thing. Families were much bigger in the past

and so afforded, with everybody's friends, wide enough social circles. With the decline in the family, too, home entertaining has fallen off—another fruitful source only 30 years ago. And the well-brought-up young man or woman is cut off from many of the modes of meeting and mating that are traditional in a different stratum! picking-up, cheap dance halls and so on.

More than those things, however, is the increasing isolation of individuals in modern society a factor. Miss Jenner recognizes it as a source of many clients: "Men come to us because, although they are always out and about, they have not the opportunity of meeting the sort of woman they want to marry. . . . According to statistics, loneliness is one of the greatest causes of unhappiness in the world today." More revealing is the chapter in which one of her former clients relates meeting 47 women through the bureau before he was suited. "My one lasting impression," he says, "is one of loneliness. I never imagined women could be so pitifully lonely. They seemed without any sort of attachments or life of their own. Some were dreadfully shy, some were over-eager, and it was a bit embarrassing when they got a little demonstrative."

Modern civilization has demonstrated the truth that crowds are the loneliest places. The division of labour, the disintegration of community life and the delegation of personal responsibility to specialists have made ours a world congested but lonely: frustration is everywhere, and the dominant frustration is that of man's desire for affection and free social intercourse. Many of the advertisers in the two papers cited speak only of wanting companionship and affection. The truly horrifying thing in the Christie murder case of two years ago was not the necrophiliac antics of that wretched little man, but the fact that in the 20th century, in the most crowded of cities, four women could vanish—unnoticed, unasked-for.

With the desire for affection comes the desire for romance. The marriage agency offers at first glance an unlimited field: specify your ideal, and hey presto! Many of the advertisers do obviously think in those terms, and ask for husbands tall, well-groomed, travelled and athletic, or wives who personify the heroines of romantic novels. The craving for romance is craving for the emotional experience which never comes to most people in the workaday world—fed, too, by the films and the lending libraries. Miss Jenner writes: "There must be thousands of girls like the 24-year-old librarian who came up the other day. She tells me that she goes back to her bed-sitting-room in an outer suburb every evening, and a couple of evenings a week she goes to the pictures—alone. 'I don't speak to a soul except the girl in the box-office, and maybe that's why I am so stuck on Ian Hunter.'"

This, then, is where the marriage agency comes in. The world has changed in many ways from the time when the girl or boy next door was heart's desire. The *Matrimonial Post*, the *Matrimonial Times* and Heather Jenner's Bureau, fulfil needs which our society has created for increasing numbers of people. From all the evidence, they conduct their businesses sensibly and with sympathy; and the clients seem to be well satisfied: certainly the man who wrote to Mrs. Radford, of the *Post*, "Mrs. E. has just written me a very nice, straightforward letter. She should be O.K." Essentially, they sell the chance of affection and the hope of true romance. The criticism cannot be of them, but of the world in which such needs exist.

(Continued on page 74)

## ANTARCTICA—1910 : 1955

ON June 1st, 1910, a little wooden ship called the "Terra Nuova" steamed slowly out of the West India Dock.

"Terra Nuova" means "new land" and there this leaky old tub was bound.

She was going to sail across the world, calling at New Zealand to pick up cargo on her way to the South Polar seas. She had a crew of seven officers and 23 men; also on board, piled high and filling almost every inch of her small deck, were 15 Siberian ponies in stalls, 33 husky dogs in kennels, drums of oil, sledges, tractors, tents, sacks of coal, tins of food and cases of scientific instruments. Also crammed on board were 12 expert scientists and 14 picked men, including two Russian dog-drivers and a young Norwegian naval lieutenant as ski-expert. To evade the harbour regulations she flew the pennant of the Thames Yacht Club.

It was the largest expedition which had ever left for the South.

"The object of Captain Scott's second expedition was mainly scientific. It was his ambition that in his ship there should be the most completely equipped expedition for scientific purposes that had ever left these shores. In this he succeeded." (Sir Clements Markham Introduction to "Scott's Last Expedition.")

For his scientific survey, Scott took a double-walled hut 90 feet long, where a team of scientists, with their assistants, could live and work for two years.

Scott was a famous explorer, who had been to the Antarctic twice already.

On the way across the South Pacific, the "Terra Nuova" ran into a violent storm and shipped so much water that the engine room fires were put out. Everybody on board took turns at the hand-pumps day and night. At one period, she was baled out with hand buckets like a rowing boat, and the ship's carpenter had to cut a hole through a bulkhead to free the water.

The heavy cargo, tightly lashed to the top-heavy deck, broke loose under the terrific pounding of the mountainous seas and tons of precious coal and several hundred gallons of petrol had to be dumped overboard.

In spite of this, the pack-ice was eventually reached, and the job of landing tons of stores began.

All went well as men, dogs, horses, sledges, food, and the parts of the hut, were landed. Everybody worked with a will and, day after day, teams of dogs and the ponies, pulled sledge loads of food, oil, hay and coal, across the ice to the spot where the hut was being erected.

Then came disaster. Two of the heavy motor tractors had been landed and dragged up to safety. The third was lowered over the ship's side, when it suddenly crashed through the ice straight to the sea bottom. This showed that the ice was getting thinner, and sure enough, shortly after this, three of the best men had a hard time jumping ponies to safety across broken ice, while hunted by killer whales. One horse was lost.

Still the work went on and a proper scientific laboratory was fitted up in the hut, with a weather station outside, connected by telephone.

Scott had genuine scientific interest, and a real knowledge of the work his experts were doing.

"Science," he said, "is the rock foundation of everything."

He was singularly fortunate in his chief of scientific staff, Dr. Edward Wilson, a most outstanding man.

A Doctor of Medicine, first class naturalist, zoologist of repute, and a parasitologist, whose work had already won official recognition, his illustrations for works in British Natural History had established him as a great artist.

His sketches and drawings for the expedition are an unsurpassed record of skill and ability.

Everyday, work went steadily on. Precise records were kept, preparations made, clothes and food tested, horses and dogs trained. After some disastrous adventures of small parties, the preparations were made in later winter for the Polar journey itself.

A Depot-laying journey was made for the purpose of dumping supplies along the pre-arranged route.

Finally, in November 1911, a start was made on the actual trek to the Pole. Four supporting parties, the first of motor sledges (which soon broke down), the second of pony drawn sledges, the third of dog teams and the fourth of men, "man-hauling," were organised.

They were very well organised. Very complicated arrangements had to be made to ration the food and stores between each party at each depot, as it returned in rotation, back along the appointed route.

Meantime, it was learned that a Norwegian party under Amundsen, had already arrived in Nansen's famous ship the "Fram," and after a bad start had struck out for the pole by a different route.

In spite of difficulties, Scott explicitly expressed himself in his reports and Diary as delighted with his men. For the scientific staff he had only praise. What pleased him most was the way in which these biologists, physicists, and zoologists, rolled up their sleeves and plunged into the dirtiest most unpleasant jobs with infectious enthusiasm.

"All the scientific people keep night watch when they have no special work to do, and I have never seen a party of men so anxious to be doing work. When there is anything to be done, such as making or shortening sail, digging ice floes for the water supply, it goes without saying that all the afterguards turn out to do it.

There is no hesitation and no distinction. It will be the same when it comes to landing stores or doing any other kind of manual labour.

The spirit of the enterprise is as bright as ever. Everyone strives to help everyone else.

The attitude of the men is equally worthy of admiration. In the fore-castle, as in the wardroom, there is a rush to be first when work is to be done, and the same desire to sacrifice selfish considerations to the success of the expedition."

Scott Diary, Scott's Last Expedition.

A further notable feature was the way in which ordinary naval ratings interested themselves in the expedition's scientific work, and even made useful contributions to it.

To stimulate interest and assist organisation, a course of lectures was arranged in the hut at which the experts each expounded the objects and methods of their work. Scott was gratified at the way the laymen responded to these.

The venture was hampered from the start by lack of funds. Scott had difficulty in raising the minimum of £10,000 and had to write begging letters and cadge shillings and even pennies for tents and sleeping bags from



schools.

The newspapers, now sensational, no longer smelt news in Polar exploration. Two great journeys by Shackleton, and the planting of the U.S. flag at the North Pole by Peary, had satiated newspaper readers. Still, publicity was needed to raise funds, so "the dash to the Pole" was included to arouse interest.

"One of the first and most important items, says Mr. Apsley Cherry-Garrard in his book "The Worst Journey in the World," the ship, would have sent Columbus on strike and nearly sent us to the bottom of the sea."

Due to the mishaps at the beginning, the failure of the motors and the loss of horses, the actual Polar journey was delayed. This meant that the worst weather was encountered, especially on the return. And yet, despite everything, the final Polar party, consisting of Scott himself, Dr. Wilson, Captain Oates, Lieutenant Bowers, and Seaman Edgar Evans, reached the Pole, covering the 1,250 miles and nearly 1,000 miles of the journey back on ski and foot, until insufficient food and oil and disastrously bad weather (soft snow into which the sledge sunk) and an accident to Evans, held them back. Evans was buried where he collapsed. Still the party struggled on until a blinding blizzard forced them to pitch their tent.

For three days it raged. Plans were made for a sortie by Wilson and Bowers, to go the 11 paltry miles to the Ton Depot, which meant salvation. It proved impossible to see outside the tent. Oates staggered out to die. Scott sat with his two companions, feet frost bitten, calmly writing the letters and the last entry in his Diary which has since become world famous.

It was not until nine months later that a search party under Dr. Atkinson found their bodies.

In February, 1912, the "Terra Nuova" arrived back in New Zealand with the tragic news.

Important things had been happening in England, too. The Home Secretary, Mr. Churchill, had been leading a gallant battle to exterminate two wicked anarchists in Sidney Street, Whitechapel, London.

A vast area of the Antarctic became British, the Polar line itself was claimed as Queen Maud's land for Norway.

Two years later, the first World War broke. Capitalist Governments, which in 1910, sent men to explore the southern ice in the "Terra Nuova" "picked up in the

second hand market and faked up for the transport of ponies, dogs, motors, and all the impedimenta of a Polar expedition!" (*Worst Journey in the World*), refusing to grant Scott more than £20,000 and then only after he had raised £10,000 himself, poured out millions to send other men to die in France when their property interest was threatened by another group.

1910-13 were great years of polar exploration. Competition between capitalist states became intense.

"We pursued knowledge as men pursue knowledge and animals do not—and, that they say is one difference between us—in a curiously detached and impersonal way. Most of us were not ambitious for material gain. We had no particular wish that the knowledge should be of use to anyone, we wanted to know."—(Garrard, Page 601, "Worst Journey in the World.")

Mr. Garrard says that "No shopkeeper will look at research which does not promise him a financial reward" and that "some will tell you that you are mad, and nearly all will say what is the use."

Postscript "Worst Journey."

Today, 44 years later, the Antarctic has acquired new importance.

The Chilean Government has requested reports on the despatch that Britain intends to explode hydrogen bombs in the Antarctic.

*Evening News*, 6th March, 1955.

The feasibility of exploding the giant glaciers has already been discussed. One effect of this would be to raise the tides in the Southern hemisphere.

The United States has already announced the departure of a large expedition of several ships and planes next year, to set up six research stations for regular reports.

Next year, also, queer coincidence this, a new expedition is to set out in the reverse direction under Hillary the Everest climber.

Utilising the knowledge gained by Scott's team, which took two years to collate, it will probably be quite successful.

As long as capitalism lasts its success will be no more than the further enrichment of the owners of property at the expense of the hardship and suffering of the workers, whether pulling a sledge in the snow, a truck down a mine, or a hand brake on a bus.

HORATIO.

## THE FILMS

At the Curson Cinema recently there was an excellent programme, both from the point of view of the film-lover and of the Socialist. The films are De Sica's *Umberto D* and a Spanish family comedy called *Meet Mr. Marshall*.

*Umberto D* has been described by the filmic "blurbs" as "De Sica's masterpiece," and this seems to be one of the few occasions when they are right. The film seems to be much nearer perfection than De Sica's two most famous earlier films—*Bicycle Thieves* and *Miracle in Milan*. It is the story of an Italian old-age pensioner and his mongrel dog, and lays bare the misery and unbearable loneliness that workers suffer in their old age.

The film opens with a demonstration by old-age pensioners for an increase in their pensions. The demonstrators have no permit and, inevitably, they are dispersed by steel-helmeted police in jeeps. The film goes on to show in agonising detail the neglect of the old; the

indifference of the majority of the young; the distrust even of other old people; and their attempt to cling to their last vestiges of human dignity.

The principal character in the film, a retired government employee, is in arrears with his rent. His landlady, a brassy blonde singer, is anxious to throw him out in order to convert his pitiful single room into a parlour. Umberto (that is his name) who has lived in the room for years, is determined not to leave, and sells first his watch and then his books in a despairing effort to raise the money for the rent. In order to save money, he gets himself admitted into a hospital for a week. When he returns home he finds his room in a shambles, his landlady having taken advantage of his absence to start work on the flat. Despairing and tired of life, the only thing left to the old man is his dog, and it is his love for the dog alone that gives him the will to go on living.

The story is all on this simple and unheroic level but, needless to say, has far greater impact than any Hollywood "epic." I will not spoil the film-goers pleasure by further description of the plot but will be content with some observations on the social implications of the film.

Perhaps the most pitiful and most crying problem that capitalism has thrown up is its treatment of its workers in old age. Condemned to inactivity and loneliness by the "Great God Profit" for which they have sweated away the greater part of their life, they are generously granted an old-age pension which has rightly been described as the final insult to the worker. There is no doubt that it is among the old, both of this country and of the other "civilised" countries, that the problem of poverty is at its most acute. They are condemned to exist on what is no more than a pittance, often in complete loneliness.

Owing to the nature of the Society in which we live, their children are often unable or unwilling to care for them, or even to help support them. The majority have the further indignity of having to apply to the National Assistance Board for money, who enquire closely into their means and capital and also whether they have any relatives capable of supporting them. This film does a very worth-while job in spotlighting this problem, and De Sica (whose *Bicycle Thieves* showed that he was alive to the social problems of our day) is to be complimented for doing so and for making a great film.

The other film in the programme provides the necessary light relief. It is an extremely amusing satire from Spain which turns on the fact that the world in general, and America in particular, looks upon Spain as being a land of gypsy dancers, bullfights, and peculiar hats. The

little town portrayed in the film is in the province of Castile, and is as unlike the outsider's concept of Spain as Devon or Cornwall.

The mayor, who is in co-operation with the rest of the population in "fiddling" their taxes, is informed that the American "Marshall Aid" officials will be visiting the town and showering their dollars wherever they go, and that a suitable welcome and demonstration must be prepared for them. The satire, not only aimed at America, but at almost everything and everybody, is carried out to great effect. The sequences in which the principal personages of the town dream about America are particularly good. The town priest, for instance, dreams that he is cross-examined by typical Hollywood gangsters and subsequently, dragged before an inquisition of Ku Klux Klan members who sentence him to the gallows. This seems to be aimed, not only at the "K.K.K." but also at the Catholic Church and the inquisition.

It is perhaps surprising that a satire of this kind should have come out of Spain, considering that unhappy country's political institutions and economic circumstances, but one frequently finds that films and books of high quality spring from the most unexpected quarters. A good example is *Los Olvidados*, an excellent film about poverty and juvenile delinquency in Mexico City which showed living conditions at their most debased, and which was sponsored by the Mexican government.

We find sometimes that people who are not Socialists have facilities for vividly illustrating things that we say. I would look at *Umberto D* in that light. Perhaps I can reiterate that this programme is well worth a visit. Both Socialists and those who do not accept our point of view will come away feeling mentally stimulated.

A.W.I.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN ASIA

S. E. Asia sounds as though it is a somewhat incon-siderable chip of Asia and meriting in view of its seeming lack of importance but the merest glimmer of interest from workers in the industrialized West. It consists of the Philippine Islands, Burma, Indo-China, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaya. It has a land area of 1½ million square miles (nearly the size of Europe) and a population of 164 million (equal to the population of the U.S.A. and Canada combined). It is apparent that S.E. Asia is of some importance in world affairs. In fact, not only by such yardsticks as population and land area but by its strategic position, rapidly developing S.E. Asia looms as a powerful influence in the coming affairs of world capitalism. This latter view appears to be held by the U.S., British, Australian, New Zealand, French and other signatories of S.E.A.T.O. (the S. E. Asia Treaty Organisation) and publicity which has been given to the Spring 1955 conference at Bangkok (in Thailand), and other events in connection with this part of the world, rather underline this view. A new Asia aid programme, amounting to \$300 million more than was allotted last year was approved by the American Administration before Mr. Dulles left for Bangkok.

Native capitalism has been slow in developing in this part of the world. Firstly, the ruling-class have traditionally considered that piracy and war are the only true

occupations for gentlemen, and in a businessman's world where Joint Industrial Councils and Wage Tribunals are the order of the day, such a tradition is a hindrance and leaves such countries a prey to Western capitalism. Secondly, the native ruling-class like to use their wealth to surround themselves with beautiful and costly articles, unlike our own ruling-class who take it for granted that the bulk of their wealth should be in stocks and shares or other profit making forms. Thirdly, rubber and other plantations and tin mines which form the leading outlet for capital in S.E. Asia require vast outlay. All this has delayed the development of the budding native capitalist. Rubber plantations for instance have to be on a large scale in order to produce rubber at market prices. It is of little use a hopeful entrepreneur starting with one tree and expecting to increase in time, for he must tend the rubber tree seven years before it will begin to produce the latex from which rubber is made. A tin dredger which is used for extracting the ore also requires a vast initial outlay. It is therefore not surprising that Western capitalism found under-developed S.E. Asia suitable to seize as colonies.

On the other hand, though late starters in the race for industrialization, the incipient capitalists of S.E. Asia were stimulated by the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 when

(Continued on page 73)



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## CRIME AND PRISON REFORMERS

In an address to the Edinburgh Rotary Club, Professor Sir Sydney Smith, formerly of the Department of Forensic Medicine of Edinburgh University, drew attention to the enormous increase of crime in the last half century:—

"... members of the community showed far too little interest in the serious problems of crime. In 1900, he said, there were 50,000 indictable crimes, compared with 500,000 in 1953. Crimes of violence had risen from 3,500 to 23,000, housebreaking cases from 77,000 to 400,000.—(Manchester Guardian, 18/2/55.)

His figures are certainly staggering. And by no means all of the increase has taken place since the second world war. By 1938 the number of indictable offences in England and Wales alone had already grown to 280,000.

Of course there is a big difference between the number of crimes the police hear about and the number of perpetrators they lay hands on; and again between that number and the number of persons found guilty. The number of persons who in 1953 were found guilty of indictable offences in England and Wales, was 115,784; it is noteworthy that 100,000 of these were concerned with property.

At all times there are plenty of people anxious to tell their fellows how to eradicate crime—parsons, educationalists, magistrates and politicians—and we must conclude from the startling growth of crime that their efforts have been utterly fruitless.

Nor have the prison reformers been much more successful if we may judge from the fairly frequent prison

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD May, 1955

disorders and the evidence of gross overcrowding in prison buildings many of which were earmarked for demolition long ago. A correspondent who wrote in the Manchester Guardian this year (7/2/55) recalled former Home Secretary Herbert Morrison's wish "to pull them all down, or blow them up, those forbidding monuments to lack of imagination"; also a speech in 1944 by the Chairman at a Conference of the Prison Officers' Association declaring that Dartmoor Prison was not fit for prisoners or staff:—"The plain truth is that the whole of this horrible place should be closed, and then razed to the ground."

The Government, though committed to plans for prison re-building, have not found the money, having so they say, so many other more important calls on finance. This is what the prison reformers were being told over a century ago and the problem was again noted after the first world war in that valuable and detailed study "English Prisons Today," by Stephen Hobhouse and Fenner Brockway.

"It is difficult to convey an impression of the hope-destroying, forbidding aspect of prison buildings. They embody architecturally the repressive characteristics of the prison system. Many of our witnesses, drawn from both officials and ex-prisoners, express the view that the only reform to which the buildings can be usefully subjected is dynamite, and the suggestion is not extreme." (Page 90).

Prison reformers fall into two distinct groups, on the one hand the Governmental experts who are concerned, like Jeremy Bentham in the early 19th century, with running prisons efficiently and cheaply and on the other, the humanitarians troubled about the welfare of the prisoners, and less often and less urgently, about the welfare of the prison staff.

John Howard was of the second group. His sympathies for prisoners had been aroused by his own experiences as prisoner of the French in the Napoleonic wars. Long afterwards Hobhouse, Brockway, and others, who had been in prison as conscientious objectors or suffragettes, embarked on their massive study which was published simultaneously with the Webb's "English Prisons Under Local Government." (Longmans Green, 1922).

This latter volume was enlivened with a shrewd and witty preface by Bernard Shaw, in which he launched an attack on prison reformers as well as on prison systems. His Preface began:—

"Imprisonment as it exists today, and as it is described hereafter in these two volumes: *English Prisons Under Local Government* and *English Prisons Today*, is a worse crime than any of those committed by its victims; for no single criminal can be as powerful for evil, or as unrestrained in its exercise, as an organized nation. Therefore, if any person is addressing himself to the perusal of these dreadful books in the spirit of a philanthropist bent on reforming a necessary and beneficent public institution, I beg him to put it down and go about some other business. It is just such reformers who have in the past made the neglect, oppression, corruption, and physical torture of the old common gaol the pretext for transforming it into that diabolical den of torment, mischief and damnation, the modern model prison."

Shaw had the insight to appreciate that prison reform, while altering the incidentals of prison life, had done nothing to alter its essential degrading cruelty. Indeed, the "reforms" have contributed to the widespread delusion, often shared, as Shaw points out, by judges, magistrates and Home Secretaries, that prisoners are now positively pampered.

Shaw's insight failed him when it came to putting forward his own idea of prison reform. Society, he said, must protect itself against lawbreakers by confining them

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD May, 1955

but should then provide them with a comfortable, full life, including "all the normal methods of creation and recreation," including marriage and parentage.

Such a solution would hardly appeal to governments and Shaw evidently did not think that it would. British governments were already concerned at the cost of keeping prisoners.

Sir Sidney Smith says that "each prisoner costs the taxpayer £230 a year and each boy in Borstal £352 a year—nearly as much as it costs to keep a boy at Winchester or Harrow." (Manchester Guardian, 18/2/55.)

## DEVELOPMENTS IN ASIA—continued from page 71

the supremacy of the white men over the coloured was for the first time shaken by the victory of the Japanese, an Asiatic country, over Russia a European power. Eventually native capitalism developed to the stage that the ruling-classes of Burma and Indonesia with the co-operation of the native working-class successfully seized the reins of government when a chance was presented in the confusions of administrative changeovers at the end of the last world war. During the war the Western colonial governments were ousted by Japan. The Allies secretly organised and armed in the countries of S.E. Asia a native opposition to the Japanese. The Japanese in turn, organised armed native opposition to oppose recapture by the Allies. In one of those strange contradictions which are sometimes found in class-dominated societies, these armed forces which were formed by the foreign capitalists to serve their own ends, when the Japanese were knocked out of the combat, turned on their progenitors before the Allies could return in force and proceeded to set up native administrations which were hostile to encroachments from any source.

Sir Anthony Eden is reported (Sunday Times, 20/2/55) as saying "The South-East Asia Treaty is purely defensive and threatens nobody. We shall do all we can

Shaw seems to have forgotten that the prisoner does not want to be confined no matter how comfortably, and what about his children who, presumably, must also grow up in confinement? More importantly Shaw takes it for granted without adequate explanation that there will continue to be "intolerably mischievous human beings" and "persons defective in the self-control needed for free life in modern society." The Socialist holds that these are the product of the competitive, class society we live in today not an inevitable by-product of human society as such.

to further a peaceful settlement of these difficult matters and thus improve the prospect for peace in the world as a whole." Whilst any capitalist government tries to gain its own ends by diplomacy there is the implication that if this fails then war may result. It should be noted that Sir Anthony and Lady Eden were accompanied amongst others by Field Marshal Sir John Harding, Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

S.E.A.T.O. seeks to organise the governments concerned to form a barrier to the expansion of "Communist" imperialism. The population of S.E. Asia with its low standard of living could provide soldiers, sailors and airmen much cheaper than the higher paid workers of the West to fight a future war on behalf of Western capitalism to enable them to continue exploiting the workers of the "democratic" portion of the world; the raw materials of this area are moreover useful for war industries and valuable as a source of profit; the markets of S.E. Asia can absorb manufactured goods from the West and in any case the capital invested in the Western concerns out there must be protected. Is not all this worth fighting for?—especially if it is the workers who are to do the fighting!

F. OFFORD.

## FOR WHAT IS THE LABOUR PARTY FIGHTING?

(Concluded)

To complete the programme for the future demands of capitalism two more contributors have made attempts at proposals of how to make this crisis-ridden system work better.

If as we go along we keep in mind the fact that all ideas about doing something for the working-class are conditioned by the fact that there is a working class, a class in constant need, then we won't go astray over the high-sounding sentimentalism of the ideas that crop up. For workers education is class-conditioned education, a need to equip oneself for a better job and get more money. This whole outlook is born of the fact that we are poor, so instead of thinking about abolishing the cause of poverty most workers think about "getting on"; thinking about it is usually as far as it goes. Like our holidays, our "houses," our clothes, and our food, our education is class conditioned. The whole of our lives is class-conditioned.

Now Mr. James Griffiths tells us of the Labour Party's challenge to youth. Mr. Griffiths should know all about what the Labour Party stands for (provided he

can keep pace with the changes) because he is chairman of the Labour Party Policy Committee. When we have fought our way through the usual carnage of promises we come to the meaningful part of what Mr. Griffiths said.

The noise created by such talk as "every boy and girl in the land has an inherent right to an equal opportunity of education," might break the sound barrier but it cannot break through the class barrier. After being reminded of the steps taken by the Labour Government in raising the school leaving age to 15, abolishing fees for secondary education and expanding opportunities for University education, we are told that the "Primary" (another word for elementary) is still "the foundation of our National System of education," and as he says, in quoting a select committee of M.P.'s report, "some of these (school) buildings are no better than slums." Of course the NEXT Labour Government will "sweep them away." In the first article we said the Labour Party always leaves unsaid what most needs saying, here is a typical example of this. Referring to youth he said, "Today their chance depends far too much upon their



parents' income, or the generosity of their local education authority. *LABOUR WILL REMOVE THIS INEQUALITY BY PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS ON A NATIONAL SCALE.* (Daily Mirror, March 7th.)

This inequality springs from the fact that a privileged few own the means of production; they are consequently wealthy while the masses are consequently poor. The *ONLY* way "to remove" the inequality is to make those means of living common property *NOT* by providing "grants"; only workers' children need grants. If the aim, the final objective in all this, was an admirable one we would have to make mention of it, but all they are worried about is the fact that the boss-class needs trained workers. "Britain lags behind in the supply of technologists as compared with the U.S.A., Russia and Western Germany. We cannot afford to lag behind. Our very survival depends on keeping ahead." As always education is the hand-maiden of the capitalist class.

#### The Old Social Order

Mr. Griffiths asserts, but produces no evidence to show, that "the old social order is breaking down. A new world is emerging," and that British youth is to have a "glorious opportunity to build a new social order founded on economic security, on social justice and on democratic freedom."

Part of this opportunity for youth in the Labour Party's scheme of things was the introduction of peace time conscription—save us from what they will do for us next. We can "strive to make, the United Nations the foundation of a new world order," when the said body is not too busy doing what it exists to do, namely, providing a diplomatic manoeuvring ground for East-West capitalists to better cut one another's throats.

The capitalist Social Order will not break down, it will remain with all its horror until a majority of the world's workers decide they have had enough of it, and no assistance in this direction has come from Mr. Griffiths.

#### "Peace" Again

Currently the Labour Party is split over the Bevan business but in case our readers are awaiting to see what Mr. Bevan has to say about it we would point out that we have already heard from the Bevan camp in the shape of Mr. Wilson. If you noticed no difference you should now realise why.

The last fighting Labourite is Mr. Attlee. Peace is his theme, and the right "foreign policy" is the way to get it. The whole of the thinking of these Labour Leaders reflects how utterly bogged down in the problems of capitalism they are. "The foreign policy of a political party is naturally based on its political philosophy." "The policy of the Labour Party is therefore founded on Socialist principles." Really Mr. Attlee you amaze us. Do you not know that to the Socialists there are no foreigners. There is no Socialist foreign policy? Socialists have a world concept whereby people living here and people living throughout the rest of the world should hold the whole world in common so that there are *NO* nations, "United" or otherwise, but one World Socialist Community and one human race. All concepts of nationality, "natives," "foreigners," races, Britishers and those "others" are all anti-working class, anti-Socialist concepts.

The Labour Party's policy, we are told, is founded on "the principles that all men are brothers." This has never stopped the Labour Party supporting wars and urging us to destroy as many of our "brothers" as we

can. "The corner stone of our policy today is full support for the United Nations Organisation." "Thus when aggression occurred in Korea we did not hesitate to support UNO by military action." This "collective security" business is beginning to sound like "Peace is War," "War is Peace."

Then the familiar nonsense about the wrong Conservative policy is trotted out again. "*We were not going to repeat the mistake of the Conservatives between the wars. They connived at aggression with the result that World War Two came.*" (Daily Mirror, March 8th. Mr. Attlee's italics.)

So whichever course is adopted, supporting UNO by "military action" or turning the blind eye to "aggression," war results.

It is heartening indeed now that the war is all over and many millions of workers are dead to be informed that it was all because of the mistakes of the Conservatives. The Labour Leaders used to tell us different tales during the war, when they were in the Coalition War Cabinet with the Conservatives.

Korea, we are told, might never have happened but for a "mistaken view" on the part of America in not recognising the so-called People's Government of China. It would seem from this that Capitalist states only go to war with each other if they do not recognise the government. The absurdity of this is self-evident, but we are sure the millions of dead and homeless in Korea will understand!

#### The Cause of War

To look for the cause of wars in "mistaken policies" is as useless as looking for its cure by building giant war machines. Mr. Attlee comes nearer the mark when he says: "One of the causes of the Second World War was the economic anarchy which resulted in the great world depressions of the 1930's," although he does not see the full significance of this because he thinks supporting "the economic measures of the United Nations" is the way out. Capitalism by its very nature must have wars. Yes, war is inevitable under Capitalism. This does not mean that we must have wars, however, because Capitalism need not continue. It is the struggling for markets, seeking profitable investments, grabbing territory for mineral and other natural resources, which is the normal mode of conduct under Capitalism, that leads to wars. Economic anarchy, the blind and ceaseless conflict to survive in the jungle of Capitalism, where each national capitalist group makes its bid for as much of the plunder as it can get. We repeat again that the workers of no land have any stake in this profits-lusting madness, and to die for the bosses right to rob them makes a mockery of their own interests.

Only when workers see this and unite for Socialism all over the world will they be able to *ABOLISH* war, by abolishing the system that breeds it.

H.B.

#### A CHEQUE FOR CUPID—continued from page 68

Over a century ago, the authors of *The Communist Manifesto* hit hard at the ethics of Capitalism. . . . "Nothing is more ridiculous," they said, "than the virtuous indignation of our bourgeois at the community of women which, they pretend, is to be openly and officially established by the Communists. The Communists have no need to introduce community of women; it has existed almost from time immemorial."

R. CÖSTER.

## THE CLASS STRUGGLE

Two classes exist in modern society—the Capitalist class and the working class. Both classes require food, clothing and shelter. The Capitalist class as a whole is an idle class; its members can obtain food, clothing and shelter without working. The working class is an active class; its members must work in order to obtain food, clothing and shelter. By the application of its labour to natural resources the working class produces the wealth of modern society.

The existence and development of the Capitalists is only possible at the expense of the working class, and involves the continual pressure of the Capitalist class upon the working class with the consequent resistance of the latter. This antagonism—this pressure and resistance is the class struggle. Whether this pressure or resistance or both are recognised does not matter. The struggle is there and no one can be a Socialist unless he recognises the existence of this struggle.

The class struggle develops in the main as a struggle on the part of the workers to obtain some amelioration of their conditions, with spasmodic attempts to obtain the whole produce of their labour. In their efforts the

workers constantly run up against the power of the modern state, the organised repressive power of the Capitalist class. Then, in increasing numbers, the workers gain the knowledge that in order to obtain a real alteration of their conditions they must obtain control of the State power. This is the beginning of class conscious political action, the recognition that all class struggles are political struggles. From this it is but a step to the understanding that when they have obtained control of the State they must abolish the present private property system and institute in its place a system of common ownership of the means for producing and distributing wealth, otherwise their efforts will be wasted. Thus they become Socialists and wage the class struggle with understanding.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain represents that section of politically-conscious workers in this country which is waging the class struggle for the overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of Socialism. We urge all workers to join with us in this struggle as it represents the only way to get rid of the economic troubles that are their constant burden.

GILMAC

## TEN YEARS AFTER

TEN uneasy years of so-called "Peace" have passed since "V" Day in May, 1945, when the people of this country released from the tension of over five years of war welcomed the cessation of hostilities with Germany. The fighting continued against Japan but her defeat was a foregone conclusion and "V.J." Day was celebrated in August, 1945. Most people optimistically hoped their troubles were over, but like the hen on the china egg, that hope was doomed from the outset.

Today, it is a rasochistic practice to read or listen to the news. Bigger and better atom bombs, long range rockets, and the devastating Hydrogen bomb, are our daily fare; all by some extraordinary process, being piled up to ensure "Peace."

Towards the end of the last war the hopes of many people turned to the United Nations Organisation, with its high ideals for international peace and security, friendly relations among nations, international co-operation in solving international problems, and, the termination of all war. A certain amount of useful work has been done by some of U.N.O.'s supplementary organisations such as Food and Agricultural Organisation, World Health Organisation, etc., but for its original object, the abolition of war, its performance has been as futile as the League of Nations and is a classic example of the mountain that laboured mightily and brought forth a very small mouse. Since 1945 the dust of conflict has peppered the air in sundry parts of the globe and in varying degrees, almost unceasingly, and shews no sign of abatement, rather the reverse. A certain amount of tension between the victorious "Allies" blew up as soon as victory was assured over the Axis, but the world was definitely split into two opposing camps when the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation came into being in 1949. The Western Powers "ganged up" against the U.S.S.R. and her satellites, signing the Atlantic pact, one day before the General

Assembly of U.N.O. opened its session in New York. The American *Daily News* (4.4.49) wrote: "With the adoption of the North Atlantic pact, the last reason for the United Nations existence will vanish . . . the U.S. State Department is bellowing that the pact is strictly within the U.N. framework and will strengthen that organisation. The U.S.S.R. is staying in the U.N.O. instead of hauling out and urging a painless end to the U.N.'s miserable existence." (Quoted from John MacLaurin's book, "U.N. and Power Politics.")

History repeats itself today in that "high level talks" between U.S., U.K., France, and Russia, are postponed till after the Paris agreement (which provides for the re-arming of Western Germany) is signed. This is known as negotiating from strength.

In June, 1950, war broke out between North and South Korea, backed by Russia and U.S.A. respectively. United Nations troops were used, as the U.N. Security Council voted for war, although American action actually preceded the vote. The Russians said the whole thing was illegal because they were absent from the meeting. In September, 1949, the year before, a United Nations Commission Report placed on record the general belief of the Korean population that the world-wide antagonism of the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. was a basic cause of the country's difficulties. In this long drawn-out struggle the Korean population were involved besides the combat forces, as modern warfare puts civilians in the front line. Writing of his experience in a recent book, Major-General Wm. F. Dean, of the American Army, says, "the South Koreans resented the troops who were there to help them and a contributory cause was the inaccuracy of American bombing which inflicted great suffering on the civilian population, while military objectives remained undetected. . . . If the people of South Korea resented the Northern invaders they certainly weren't showing it.



To me, the civilian attitude appeared to veer between enthusiasm and passive acceptance. I saw no sign of resistance or any will to resist." (Quoted from *The Listener*, 27/11/55.)

An echo of more trouble in Korea sounded recently when it was reported that United Nations High Command have received Intelligence reports which have satisfied the Allied Powers (as to their authenticity) that North Korea has violated her truce agreement by the build-up of armaments. In these circumstances, the U.S. suggests to U.N.O. that the best way out would be to denounce the truce stipulation about not increasing armaments on either side.

Presumably leaving both sides free to re-arm to their hearts' content.

The United States is committed to protect the remnants of General Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces on Formosa against attacks by the Chinese Communist Government.

The Nationalist Government is represented on U.N.O. but the official Chinese Government has no seat on the Council. In January of this year the U.S. Seventh Fleet assisted in the evacuation of non-combatants from the Tachen Islands, then under Nationalist rule, but threatened with invasion from the mainland. The situation in these parts has all the earmarks of a potential explosion, as the Chinese on the mainland fear that America's intervention in the affairs of Formosa is a threat to their security, while America asserts that it is necessary for her "defence."

Incidentally, America has over 500 military bases of all sorts on the territories of other people. (Quoted from *United Nations and Power Politics* by John MacLaurin). Sir Anthony Eden's recent visit to Bangkok was to assist in the organisation of the "defence" of South East Asia in company with members of S.E.A.T.O.

## CLASS AND COLOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA

### Class struggle

The class struggle in a fully-developed capitalist society is a struggle between the ruling class, which owns the means of production, and the working class, which operates the means of production and is exploited by the ruling class. Such a struggle can be observed in full swing in countries like Britain and America. But in societies which are slightly less fully developed, the capitalist class has to fight not only against the working class, but against the previous ruling class—that is the class which derived its power from the ownership of land, and which formed the master class before the progress of large-scale industry threw up another class to challenge it. Nineteenth-century Britain witnessed the strife between the old landed upper class and the rising industrial upper class, culminating in the victory of the latter in the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832 and the Repeal of the Corn Laws 14 years later.

The situation in South Africa at the present time is in some ways not dissimilar to the situation in this country 130 years ago. There is a class which draws its wealth from the ownership of land; and there is a class which draws its wealth from the ownership of industry. There are, in fact, two kinds of society in South Africa: the old agricultural society, and the new industrial society.

So the nations of the world plot and plan, bristle and bare fangs, gang up and change sides. "Peace" is their averred object but preparations for war go forward in case the "other fellow" starts something. The Press and Radio help to mould public opinion to the idea that war by the Western Bloc against Communism (Russian brand, and possibly Chinese) is inevitable. A case in point occurred recently when exceptionally widespread publicity was given to the atrocities committed on British prisoners of war in Korea. Such incidents, capitalised upon and harnessed for propaganda purposes, guide and foster enmity between nations. War has always a brutalising influence and no nation can show a clean slate in this respect.

We have seen that U.N.O. has not got the answer to world peace, but don't despair, the Church has come forward with a brilliant solution, i.e., the only hope for the world is a great religious revival.

It is true that a number of clergy are Pacifists; but in the event of war the Church will line up with the State, as its past history testifies. It discovers it to be a "just and righteous war" and gives it its blessing.

In the House of Lords on 16th March, Dr. Cyril Garbett, Archbishop of York, said: "the Hydrogen bomb was an 'agonising challenge to conscience,' but 'the chief justification for making the bomb must be that it will provide a shield for the work of peace-making.'"

The workers of the world alone have the answer to the abolition of war, unknown to the vast majority it lies within their grasp. By its very nature the present set-up will continue to breed wars, great and small, until the workers decide to do something about it. If they are hoping that the prevailing world situation is liable to improve we must give our considered opinion in the words of Shaw's immortal heroine Eliza Doolittle, "Not bloody likely."

FEMME.

South African politics reflect the economic and social struggle between the old form of society and the new.

### Dutch South Africa

The farming community of South Africa is very largely composed of Afrikaners—descendants of Dutch, Flemish, German Protestant and French Huguenot immigrants. These Afrikaner farmers own the land and employ Negro labourers. The landowners are and always have been determined that the Bantu shall form merely a floating population, with no stake in the land. The Bantu farm-workers have very little money; the white farmer pays the greater part of his labourers' meagre wages in kind, in the form of huts to sleep and eat in, rough grazing for their few head of cattle, and seed for their garden plots. This form of society has existed, and from the point of view of the ruling and owning class has prospered, almost since the first settlers were put ashore, by the Dutch in the 17th century, to hold the Cape as a valuable halfway house for the ships trading to the East.

### British South Africa

The Dutch took possession of the Cape as a landfall on the way to India; and the British stole (or, to use a more polite word, captured) it from them in 1806 for the same reason. As the century wore on, and the Dutch

quarrelled with their new masters, the more independent spirits among the settlers trekked north, to Natal, then across the Orange River, and finally across the Vaal River. But British settlers followed them, attracted by the lure of diamonds and of gold. The apostle of this industrial expansion was Cecil Rhodes, at once Prime Minister of the Cape and Managing Director of the British South Africa Company; its centres of operation were Kimberley and the Witwatersrand, and its outlets Cape Town and the ports of Natal. A number of armed clashes between the British and the Boers culminated at the turn of the century in the Boer War, which, at length, the British won, by means of destroying the farmsteads of their enemies and transporting their families into concentration camps, where many of the Boer children died. It may be doubted whether at that time the strength of the new capitalist class was sufficient by itself to overcome the class which drew its strength from the land; but the ultimate issue was put beyond dispute by outside intervention. The farming-landowning class had been cut off from its former fatherlands in Europe; while the Capitalist class could count on the help of imperialist Britain, then the greatest industrial power in the world.

This is the background of the South African scene. But the Boer War did not settle the matter. There was, and still is, much vitality left in the Afrikaner farming class. It still carries on its resistance to the industrial capitalist class; but in the long run one of them must go down before the other.

### Black South Africa

The hostility between these two classes can be seen clearly in their respective attitudes to that majority of the South African population—the Negroes—who form the bulk of the working-class, alike on the farm owned by the Afrikaner and in the mine or factory owned by the Britisher. Each of them regards this class as subordinate. But while the Afrikaner's self-interest drives him to adopt a harsh and oppressive policy, the Britisher, also motivated by self-interest, tends to take a more "liberal" point of view.

To the Afrikaner the Negro has two possible capacities. He is, first and foremost, a rival for the ownership of the land. There were in 1946 over 8,000,000 Negroes in the Union, against 2,300,000 whites, nearly 1,000,000 Cape Coloured (of mixed white and black ancestry) and 200,000 Asiatics (nearly all of them Indians). Most of the Negroes are the descendants of the Zulu-Xhosa peoples, who came into the country from the North while the whites came in from overseas—the whites having exterminated or driven out the original black inhabitants of the area. These white and black invaders naturally found themselves in competition for the possession of the land. It has always been the policy of the Afrikaner landed interest to confine Negro ownership of land to certain fixed "Native" reserves: the Bantu can emerge from these reserves only as landless labourers on the white-owned farms, and must never be allowed to take root in the great areas of South Africa which are kept exclusively for white ownership. This restriction of Negro ownership always applied in the Afrikaner territories of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State; and the granting of Dominion status to South Africa in 1909 by Asquith's Liberal Government enabled the Afrikaners (who were the numerical majority of the white population) to impose the same rule throughout South Africa. Since 1913, Negroes have been able to own land only in certain

carefully limited areas of the Union. At the present time, more than three-quarters of the total population of South Africa can own land in only one-tenth of its territory. This fragment of South Africa set aside for Negro ownership consists largely of less favoured land in remote districts, such as the Transkei Reserve in eastern Cape Province. At the beginning of this year there was only one important urban area throughout South Africa where Negroes could own land; and that was in a suburb of Johannesburg called Sophiatown.

### Anomaly

The Nationalist Government has now put a stop to this anomalous situation. It has built a new settlement of corrugated-iron-roofed one-storey-huts at Meadowlands, eleven miles outside Johannesburg, and has forcibly begun to evict the Africans of Sophiatown from their freeholds and to carry them and their goods to Meadowlands. There the Negroes will be allowed to become tenants of the land; but they will not be allowed to own it. The Africans have no say in the matter. The Government says they must go, fixes the exact days, and provides transport and police. This operation is being carried out under the Native Resettlement Act, passed by a Parliament elected almost exclusively by the whites. The Nationalists claim that the removal to Meadowlands is aimed solely at improving Native housing; but there are other African locations around Johannesburg where the housing conditions are worse than at Sophiatown; and, what is more, the shacks of Sophiatown are being destroyed and the area reserved for white occupation—this in a city which is short of 50,000 houses for its black population (*Daily Telegraph*, 10/2/55). The real aim is clearly to destroy the African's ability to own land in one of the few urban areas where he still had that right.

### Apartheid

The Afrikaner, then, sees the Negro as a competitor for the ownership of the land; and is led thereby to support apartheid, the policy of confining each of the ethnic groups in South Africa to its own areas—with the unspoken corollary that the areas reserved for the white minority shall be much larger than the areas reserved for the coloured majority. But to the Afrikaner the Bantu is not only a competitor for the land; he is also a farm-labourer. If apartheid were carried out in full, as is advocated by the extreme wing of the Nationalists, who would do the work? The extremists, those who embrace apartheid in all its pristine purity, say that the Boers must return to the ways of their ancestors, and themselves work their farms with their own hands and those of their families. But the majority of the Afrikaners are no more prepared to give up the surplus value—that is, the profits—which they make out of their African labourers, than they are to abandon their ownership of the land to the Africans. "On the farms you hear sad tales of how difficult it is to keep Africans, even with the help of legislation, from drifting away to make rather more money in urban employment. No one at these managerial levels suggests that his workers—or he—would be better off if there were a trek back to the Reserves. On the contrary the cry is for more cheap labour." (*The Times*, 14/1/55; succeeding references are also to *The Times*). The Nationalists, then, are in a dilemma. They have swept triumphantly into power on the cry of apartheid: they captured 86 of the 156 seats in the South African Parliament in 1948, and in 1953 they increased their members to 94. But



even their own supporters would not tolerate them if they ever seriously tried to put apartheid into effect.

### Big business

The Nationalists must also, when they are considering apartheid measures, reflect upon the opposition they would arouse among the English-speaking element in the Union. Although this element is now split among the United Party, the Federal Party, and the Liberal Party, it remains very powerful; for it contains within its ranks the owners of the country's industries. *The Times* correspondent, coming from a country where the Capitalist class and the ruling class are merely two names for one body of people, finds this distinctly odd. "The situation is a somewhat curious one in which a Government and those who have voted it to power play relatively little part in the conduct of big business. . . . It remains true to say that the bulk of the business in the Union, especially at its directorial and managerial levels, is carried on by men of British stock or by other non-Afrikaner immigrants. The Afrikaner now governs; the minority makes the money in the towns." (14/1/55). Curious or not, it is the fact; and the Capitalist class gains in economic power with every year that passes. "By 1939 South Africa was well advanced along a course from which, so far as can be seen, there is no turning back and which was transforming her from a land of primary producers and gold and diamond miners into a complex society in which secondary industries were looming more and more large. The process was accelerated by the war-time hold-up leading to demand for consumer and capital goods. Major industries were established or extended." (11/1/55). Industrial expansion means larger towns and more workers in the factories. If we take four of the largest cities in the Union, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, and Port Elizabeth, we find that between 1936 and 1946 the white population rose by 29%; the Cape Coloured population by 34%; the Asiatic population by 38%, and the Negro population by 71%. Recently Mr. Hepple, a South African M.P., speaking in Parliament, said that in 1936 there were only 175,000 Negroes in industry; now there are 500,000—nearly three times as many (9/2/55).

JOSHUA.

(To be continued)

## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Another Conference has passed. For three days members discussed last year's work and how we can improve on our organisation and propaganda. Attendance of visitors throughout the whole three days was very good indeed, Friday, as is usual, being the best attended day. The social and dance held on Saturday was very happy indeed. The Sunday evening propaganda rally was reasonably well attended.

**Party Pamphlets.** A delegate at the Conference urged that the list of pamphlets should be more regularly advertised in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*. These are advertised whenever space permits, but members are reminded that there are good stocks of all pamphlets at Head Office. They make good reading and are an excellent means of introducing the Party's case to sympathisers. Why not have some in stock and when contacting sympathisers, sell a copy of a suitable pamphlet.

**Exhibition at Head Office.** Owing to the Election, this has had to be deferred to a later date, yet to be fixed.

**Fulham Branch** are anxious that members support their outdoor meetings, Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at Gloucester Road (Station) and Fridays at 8 p.m. at Earls Court (Station). These are very good stations for propaganda and the Branch are certain that with support, good results will ensue. So members living in Chelsea, Fulham and Kensington, please make a note of dates and times.

P.H.

## ELECTION APPEAL

**I**N view of the decision on an early General Election we have decided to publish an Election Manifesto. It is intended that this manifesto should be distributed throughout Great Britain wherever there are members or sympathisers to carry out the work of distribution. The object of the manifesto is to set out clearly the Party's position and policy, in contrast to the policies of the other Capitalist parties.

The Party are unable to contest the General Election on any scale, and in fact it is possible that we shall be financially unable to contest a constituency. Nevertheless, we feel that the electorate should be given the opportunity of at least having before them a statement of our aims and object and be made aware that there is in existence a genuine Socialist Party working for the abolition of Capitalism.

Most readers of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* are aware that we are severely handicapped in this work by our organisational and financial limitations, particularly the latter. We are, therefore, making this appeal for donations to assist us in the preparation and distribution of this Manifesto. Those of you who cannot participate for a variety of reasons in the everyday work of our organisation can help us in a material way by sending money for what is, really, a vital and urgent matter. Please send all you can to E. LAKE, 52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET, LONDON, S.W.4. All donations, large or small, will be duly acknowledged.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

#### DEWSBURY

To readers of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* in Dewsbury, Bradford and District Branch meets 22nd May, 728, Leeds Road, Shaw Cross, Dewsbury, for discussion.

#### PAMPHLETS

"The Socialist Party and War"	1/-	(Post free 1/2)
"Russia Since 1917"	1/-	" " 1/2
"The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years"	1/-	" " 1/2
"The Racial Problem—A Socialist Analysis"	1/-	" " 1/2
"Socialism"	4d.	" " 6d.
"Socialism or Federal Union?"	4d.	" " 6d.
"The Socialist Party: Its Principles and Policy"	4d.	" " 6d.
"Is Labour Government the Way to Socialism?"	4d.	" " 6d.
"Nationalisation or Socialism?"	6d.	" " 8d.

All obtainable from the Literature Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

## MAY DAY RALLY

in  
**HYDE PARK**  
Sunday, 1st May — 3 p.m.

## MAY DAY PROPAGANDA MEETING

at  
**CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1**  
Sunday, 1st May — 7 p.m.

All Welcome! Questions and Discussion

### GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

### GLASGOW

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove Branch)

#### DEBATE

on MONDAY, 2nd MAY, at 7 p.m.

in

KENT HALL, ST. ANDREW'S HALLS

"SOCIALISM or LIBERALISM"

For S.P.G.B.—J. HIGGINS

For Woodside Liberal Association—COLIN BROWN, J.P.

Joint Glasgow (City and Kelvingrove) Branches

#### MAY DAY MEETING

ST. ANDREW'S HALLS (Kent Hall)

at 7.0 p.m.

Subject: "Socialism To-day."

Speakers: J. HIGGINS, T. A. MULHERON.

### WEEK-END SCHOOL

Held on Saturday and Sunday, 7th and 8th MAY

in

KENILWORTH HOTEL, QUEEN STREET, GLASGOW

Subjects and speakers as follows:

- (1) "History as a Science."—T. A. MULHERON. Saturday at 7.0 p.m.
- (2) "Marxism and Economic Crises."—J. RICHMOND. Sunday at 3.0 p.m.
- (3) "Challenge of Socialism."—A. SHAW, J. HIGGINS. Sunday at 7.0 p.m.

### BOREHAM WOOD

Will members and sympathisers willing to cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood contact:

I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

### OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

#### SUNDAYS

Hyde Park	...	3 p.m.	
East Street (Walworth)	...	May 8th	11 a.m.
		15th	12.30
		22nd	11 a.m.
		29th	12.30
Finsbury Park	...		3.30 p.m.
Whitestone Pond (Hampstead)	...		11.30 a.m.
Beresford Square (Woolwich)	...		8 p.m.

#### WEDNESDAYS

Gloucester Road Station ... 8 p.m.

#### FRIDAYS

Station Road, Ilford ... 8 p.m. (From 6th May)

Earls Court Station ... 8 p.m.

#### SATURDAYS

Ealing Green ... 3 p.m.

Jolly Butchers Hill ... 8 p.m.

Rushcroft Road, Brixton ... 8 p.m.



## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP**—Secretary: R. Smith, 1, Littlejohn Street, Dundee. Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 4th and 18th May, 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**HOUNSLOW**—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

**OLDHAM**—Group meets Wednesdays 11th and 25th May, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

**ROMFORD**—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

**RUGBY**—Group meets alternate Mondays 2nd, 16th and 30th May, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

**PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS**  
**PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2**  
Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

**SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.**  
Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee at the Head Office or to a local branch.

**HACKNEY LECTURES**  
at  
**CO-OP. HALL**  
**197 MARE STREET, E.8**  
Mondays at 8 p.m.  
May 2nd. "Religion and the Materialist Conception of History"—W. Kerr  
May 9th. "Industry since 1848"—Film—E. Kersley

**MAY SALES DRIVE**  
**EALING BRANCH CANVASSES**  
All members invited to take part.

<b>Sunday, May 1st</b>	<b>South Ealing. Meet 10.45 a.m. Northfields Station.</b>
<b>Wednesday, May 4th</b>	<b>Shepherds Bush. Meet 7.30 p.m. Shepherds Bush Met. Stn.</b>
<b>Sunday, May 8th</b>	<b>Hounslow. Meet 10.45 a.m. Hounslow, The Bell.</b>
<b>Tuesday, May 10th</b>	<b>East Acton. Meet 7.30 p.m. East Acton Stn. (Central Line).</b>
<b>Wednesday, May 11th</b>	<b>7.30 p.m. East Acton as above.</b>
<b>Sunday, May 15th</b>	<b>Hounslow. 10.45 a.m. at The Bell.</b>
<b>Wednesday, May 18th</b>	<b>7.30 p.m. East Acton as above.</b>
<b>Sunday, May 22nd</b>	<b>Meet: 10.45 a.m. Northfields Stn.</b>

## VISIT TO BRIGHTON

West Ham Branch will pay a visit to Brighton on 3rd July, 1955, and hold a meeting in conjunction with Brighton Branch at the Fish Market. All members and friends are welcome. Approx. cost 11/- per head. Those interested please communicate with K. Hollanders, 5, York Road, Ilford, Essex. Tel. ILF 2884.

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD May, 1955

## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY**. Correspondence to Secretary. c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., meets at 7.30 p.m., 5th and 19th May.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT**. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON**. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15.

**CROYDON** meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd. (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: H. J. Wilson, 7, Cyril Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel.: Bexleyheath 1950.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6., (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.). Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea. S.W.3.

**GLASGOW** (City) meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW** (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 2nd, 16th and 30th May, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. MacDougall, 42 Stoneyhurst Street, Possil Park Glasgow, N.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** Enquiries to A. D. Oliver, 11, Penywern Road, Earls Court, S.W.5

**HIGH WYCOMBE** Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. L. H. Courtney, 53, Canonbury Park South, Islington, N.1.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 3rd, 17th and 31st May George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breaky, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. C. May, 1 Hanover Road, N.W.10.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**ST. PANCRAS** meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o. Head Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.9.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Merton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m., Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Outdoor meetings Sunday 8 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 610 Vol. 51 June, 1955

SLUMS DOUBLED  
SINCE 1933

HIRE PURCHASE

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

FIFTY YEARS AGO

TEN YEARS AFTER

CLASS AND COLOUR  
IN SOUTH AFRICA

THE FILMS

Registered for transmission to  
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

<sup>D</sup>  
4

## The Politicians and the Cost of Living

IN ALL THE ELECTIONS of the 'twenties and 'thirties the chief issue was unemployment: who caused it and how to cure it. Since the war pride of place has been given to the cost of living: who sent it up and who will bring it down again. The attitudes of the Governments and the Opposition parties towards unemployment in the first period have been paralleled by their attitudes towards rising prices in the second. Each party claims that it will keep prices (or unemployment) down because it alone knows how. Each party when in power pretends to be surprised and displeased to find prices (or unemployment) rising, and trots out a glib excuse: it is due to strikes, high wages, or low productivity, or to world factors beyond the control of the Government in this country.

At no time has there been agreement between what the parties promised at elections and what they produced in office. Conservatives, Labour and Liberals, were all subscribers to the policy laid down in the document "Employment Policy" issued by the Coalition Government in 1944. Among other things it committed them to the policy of keeping prices down, and at successive elections they all promised to pursue the policy of avoiding a rising cost of living.

In or out of office they have put forward a number of schemes for achieving this, credit restrictions, higher Bank interest, rates, budget surpluses, increased national savings, bulk buying, price controls, limitation of dividends, restraint in wage demands, action against monopolies and price rings, food subsidies, etc., etc., without the upward movement of prices since 1938 being arrested.

Indeed prices have in fact risen since 1914 with only one downward movement—that which marked the deflation of the '20's. The cost of living in October, 1951, when the Labour Government left office, was about 40 per cent. above 1945, now it is 60 per cent.

We are faced then with the remarkable happening that those who keep on telling us that they can and will keep prices down if we put them into power go on asking for votes on no better ground than their total failure to do so when they were in power.

Yet one thing is certain. The Government's financial advisers and at least some members of Tory and Labour Cabinets have known all along how to keep prices down or reduce them again to a former level. They know how to reduce the cost of living—which most electors want—but they dare not do it because they fear it would be accompanied by something most electors do not want—an increase of unemployment.

So by tacit agreement the party leaders fiercely fight a mock battle over the



cost of living but avoid even a mention of the remedy known to them.

That is why no party has suggested that the method which did produce a fall in prices when it was adopted in 1920, namely currency control and limitation, should be tried now. Prices rose from 1914 owing to the expansion of the note issue and so long as that continued went on rising despite everything the Government did. Then by minute of 15 December, 1919, Austen Chamberlain announced that the Government would act on the recommendation of the Cunliffe Committee and would limit the fiduciary note issue for 1920 to £321 million, the maximum then reached in 1919, and that in subsequent years the permitted maximum would be the actual maximum of the preceding year. After a few months the effects of this policy of currency limitations became apparent and the trend of prices was reversed, affecting wholesale prices in the middle of 1920 and retail prices before the end of the year.

Later on the 1919 decision was abandoned and the note issue has been steadily increased, particularly since 1939. It now stands at £1,775 million, £50 million of which was added this year in April and May, £25 million on each occasion, and the Labour and Tory leaders who were responsible still affect to be surprised that the cost of living and prices generally have mounted accordingly.

If the Tory and Labour leaders now really believe their professed determination to lower prices why their reluctance even to suggest the renewed application of the policy which proved so effective when it was applied 35 years ago?

It is because both parties are convinced that such a policy is incompatible with "full employment," that in fact full employment can only be kept going by a "little gentle dose of inflation." As an unsigned article in the *Financial Times* phrased it:—

"Among considering people there can be few illusions over what the election is really about. It is a matter of voting for the party that is likely to do the least harm to the precarious economy in which we live. In short, for the party that will inflate the least."—(*Financial Times*, 9/5/55.)

It might be thought that at least the politicians and their economic advisers have been right to practice this deception on the voters for it has been through their foresight and skill that we have been spared heavy unemployment. But before anyone starts complimenting them on their cleverness in thinking beforehand that the way to avoid heavy unemployment was to pursue a policy of inflation and consequent rising costs of living he should turn to the 1944 statement on "Employment Policy," which shows that they did not foresee this at all but then believed the opposite. They were all committed to maintaining "full employment," but the 1944 policy statement held that it could only be achieved if prices and wages did not go on rising but remained "reasonably stable." The idea was that if prices were kept down the workers could be persuaded to accept "wage restraint."

Between the wars, when prices were falling, workers' struggles to raise or even to maintain money wages were impeded by the heavy unemployment.

After the war, when the Labour Government came into office, they intended to operate the policy of the 1944 statement and have both prices and wages stable. In the "Labour Party Speakers' Handbook," 1949-50 (p. 207) it was claimed that during the first two years of Labour Government from 1945 to 1947, "prices were

kept fairly stable"; though critics maintained with undeniable evidence that it was the cost of living index that was kept down, not the cost of living. After 1947, when even the Labour Government could not, in face of its own figures, deny that the cost of living was rising the "wage restraint" policy was restated and emphasised by the late Sir Stafford Cripps. It was only partially successful and money wages went on rising, though all the time lagging behind the soaring cost of living. The situation was unlike that between the wars but it was a distinction without a real difference. Then the employers' ally against the workers' efforts to raise their standard of living was unemployment, now the usefulness of every increase of wages and insurance benefits was subject to ceaseless erosion by higher prices, which whittled away the purchasing power of every pound.

And this has been the chosen policy of all post-war Governments. A milestone in the inflationary trend was the devaluation of the pound by the Labour Government in 1949. They knew this must raise the cost of living though they continued to make their stock speeches about their resolve to keep it from rising.

Also all the Governments since the war have made great efforts to persuade the workers to go without purchases they would normally have made and to save the money instead. Since the Governments knew that their currency and devaluation policies would raise the cost of living this savings drive was but a further deception, the losers being those who put their money into National Savings.

True, if they invested £50 they have received interest and eventually have the £50 back, but at that later date it buys very much much less than could have been bought with the original £50. The big investors who went for company ordinary shares suffered no such loss as the prices of their shares went up along with other prices.

We may be sure that future Tory and Labour Governments, so long as they go on fearing that heavy unemployment would put them out of office, will continue their policy of gentle inflation and their two-faced policy of promising to reduce the cost of living without any intention of doing so by the means they know would be effective.

What happened between the wars and what has happened since are just two faces of the capitalist system of society. Of course a disturbance of the precarious balance of world production and markets of the size and pattern of that which occurred in 1931 will find the currency inflation remedy helpless to stop a collapse.

In 1931, as now, the S.P.G.B. pointed out that the one way not to have unemployment and price fluctuations to be have a system of society in which commodities, among them the workers power to labour, are not bought and sold—the system of society known as Socialism.

H.

### WESTERN SOCIALIST

*The Journal of Scientific Socialism in the Western Hemisphere. Published jointly by the W.S.P. of the United States and the Socialist Party of Canada.*

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## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," June, 1905)

### A Retrospect

The 12th of June witnesses the first anniversary of the formation of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. It thus affords a meet opportunity to review our year's work to ascertain whether our hopes have been fulfilled and our efforts justified.

The formation of a new party was rendered imperative by the falling away of the S.D.F. from the path of political right doing. Those who formed the new party had, almost without exception, been members of the S.D.F., the primary and for many years the only Socialist organisation in Great Britain. During many years of its life it had held aloft the banner of uncompromising Socialism in this country and many of us hoped that it would continue to work along the lines of no compromise with other political parties which is dictated by the existence of a class struggle.

Some years ago, however, when reaction dominated every sphere of thought—political or scientific—throughout Europe and America, new ideas were introduced into the S.D.F. by members of the organisation whose Socialism was rooted in sentiment rather than in scientific knowledge. Looking around them in the political world they saw that organisations of the half-way house character were obtaining a larger measure of support than was their own organisation. Unwitting that such must needs be the case in the present stage of capitalist development,

they set themselves to the task of winning their own organisation to a similar position and to the adoption of a similar line of action. In this they were highly successful and the manner in which the S.D.F. adapted itself to its new way of looking at political events is of exceeding interest, and at a more convenient season we shall unfold the manner of its development from a no-compromise organisation to an organisation believing in and accepting entangling alliances.

The falling away of the S.D.F. from its traditional method was viewed with the deepest regret by those members of the organisation who still adhered to the ideas of uncompromising Socialism. They hoped against hope that their organisation would be recalled to a sense of its wrong-doing—that once again it would return to the path of Socialist progress and weld itself into an organisation deserving the support of every Socialist.

Such was not to be the case. Reluctantly there was forced upon them the opinion that the organisation to which they had hitherto given a whole-hearted support was unworthy, and they decided to withdraw from its ranks and form a Socialist organisation into which they could throw their entire energy and untiringly work towards the making it into a strong political organisation.

This, then, was the idea of those who, in June 12th, 1904, decided to form the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

## HIRE PURCHASE

"To Have and Have Not"

It is often said that *Punch* is the great social historian of the last 100 years. Since comic journals thrive on aptness rather than humour, they do in fact provide a minor guide to changes in manners and morals. A joke that has entirely disappeared now is the one about "the instalments on the furniture." Continually, in magazines of the 1920's little boys blurted out that the settee wasn't paid for, and men called to take back the chairs when guests had come to tea—the psychology being that, 25 years ago, to buy on hire-purchase was to have a guilty secret.

All different nowadays, of course. There are even good, wise reasons for instalment buying: for example, if the thing goes wrong the firm will see to it. Hire-purchase is an accepted social fact. Last year, half the radio sets, seven-tenths of the furniture and bedding and vacuum cleaners and TV sets, and nearly all the refrigerators and washing machines sold in this country were bought on hire-purchase. "Cash only" shops are the exceptions now, and very recently the instalment system has spread as far as air travel and holidays.

That is not to say all reprehension of hire-purchase has ceased. Generally, there have been two sorts of objections to it. The one voiced by most working people in the past was strictly practical: "I'm hanging no mill-stone of weekly payments round my neck," said the poor, poverty-hardened man in *Love on the Dole*. The other



objection was that to have something before paying for it is wrong—apparently a moral view but in fact only the cash customer's attitude. The people who largely



held that view were the better-off, professional and black-coated workers; since the war their position has declined, and so consequently has their moral objection to hire-purchase. Many of the "swell" shops, in fact, now advertise hire-purchase facilities.

Hire-purchase trading has gone on for at least a century. Before 1914 it was mainly a hole-and-corner business (nevertheless, plenty of suits were bought at a shilling a week). Its growth between two wars went with the mass-production of cheap luxuries—gramophones, bicycles, radio sets; the first legislation to regularize it in this country was in 1938. The great boom in instalment buying came after the second war, however. Some idea of its extent is given by the banks' statement of their loans to hire-purchase finance companies. The total in February, 1955, was £30,493,000, compared with £11,188,000 in February, 1954. The sum actually was greater, since many loans for general trading went mainly into hire-purchase; and in the same period several of the companies made capital issues.

Few shops finance their own hire-purchase trading—in fact, only the very big ones. Most of them borrow from hire-purchase credit companies, which often buy the goods themselves, receive the instalments themselves, and leave the shopkeeper as little more than an agent. There are several organizations for checking on prospective buyers. Every hire-purchase customer has his particulars filed (including how he pays); investigators discover all they can about him, and the information is filed for future reference. In America, according to a recent *Picture Post* article, the files include: "... intimate details and frank character assessments. Facts include positions and salaries of all members of a family, bank balances, litigation records, all past time buying deals, estimates of business or professional prospects, value of house or mortgage position, or amount of rent and how paid, local reputation and probably social habits. Police records are included."

Hire-purchase buying is dear. It has to be. There are the book-keeping and the postage and the enquiry fees and the advertisements (last year the Gas Council and Hoover Products each spent about a quarter of a million pounds on advertizing); the "free" maintenance is really, of course, covered in the cost. The rates of interest range from five to ten per cent. At least, those are the nominal figures: calculated on a diminishing debt, they are much higher—over two years, the usual period for furniture, they actually average out at something like 20 per cent. The number of bad debts is said to be small, and hire-purchase firms try everything before resorting to court action, which usually is fruitless for them.

Outside the main stream of instalment trading, there are innumerable related concerns; for example, the co-operative societies' "mutuality shares," where vouchers are issued to be exchanged for all sorts of goods. Then there are the clothing clubs, and a host of door-to-door easy-payment salesmen—many of the latter charging rates of interest which are exorbitant even by hire-purchase standards, and having no advertizing or accounting costs to speak of. Incidentally, cars do not figure in hire-purchase as much as would be imagined; most are bought by bank overdraft and re-mortgaging houses.

From the economists' point of view, instalment buying

is simply the form taken by the demand for certain sorts of goods today. Thus, when the number of new contracts fell last year in America, the Government hurriedly urged traders to get things back to normal. And in this country the recent restrictions on hire-purchase were headlined by the *Manchester Guardian* as "Plans to Limit Demand for Goods." A fair enough estimate: with the minimum deposit raised to 15 per cent., the demand for furniture has fallen to not much more than half what it was a year ago.

To see hire-purchase as something which—*vide* Fyfe Robertson in *Picture Post*—"puts real wealth, which otherwise would not be acquired so quickly, into consumers' hands and raises living standards," is to grasp slight appearances, however. It is easy enough to point to all the television sets, but television is only the newest replacement for the piano, and pianos were a far greater luxury in their heyday. Before the wireless era, one cost as much as a television set today—that is, anything between £40 and £70, at a time when money wages were much lower.

But to consider living standards in terms of luxuries is to succumb to advertizers' patter. The fact is that working people obtain luxuries only at the expense of other things. How can a family with £8 a week get them otherwise? The other things may, of course, be minor luxuries themselves—drinking, pictures, smoking; a small boom in smoking cures has accompanied the big one in hire-purchase. They may, on the other hand, be necessities—food and clothing; or the "solution" for a good many families is the wives' going to work. Whichever way it is, there is not much to confirm the idea of better, more gracious living for the working class.

"Luxuries" is the wrong word, anyway. There is nothing luxurious about buying clothes by instalments, knowing they will be half worn-out before they are paid for: "pay as you wear" has the sound of eternity. True, furniture is more durable—it is outmoded instead of wearing out in two or three years. A favourite sneer of precious suburban aesthetes is that working people lack taste. An ignorant untruth, as the beautiful little gardens in the dingiest surroundings show; but in any case, there is no scope for modishness when things are bought over two years to last for 20. Most people, in fact, buy furniture only once in their lives—as the hire-purchase advertisements, with their single-minded appeal to the newly-wed testify.

Probably the best example of this sort of thing is the way in which television sets have superseded one another since the war. Each latest model, gaining its owner the maximum of prestige, has been rendered inferior long before the final payment. There cannot be much feeling of luxury about having given up smoking to buy a set with a nine-inch screen five years ago and finding it primitive by today's 17-inch standards.

The truth is that hire-purchase is a monument to poverty, not a pillar of prosperity. People can buy more things, by whatever method, only if they have more money. For a year or so after the war there was no hire-purchase; it began as the briefly spectacular spending of the gratuity era faded. It is hard to believe that anybody enjoys paying instalments—indeed, these commitments add to the tension of modern living. There is no alternative except going without, however. It is all very well to think

people can save up to buy, but it doesn't work out like that—and in any case, it means going without just the same. The rise of hire-purchase and the decline of the pawnshop are probably not unconnected.

The average gross wage of male workers today is just under £9; for women, it is just over £5. According to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in November last year, there were 8,600,000 receiving less than 96s. a week. Compare those figures with pre-war ones, remembering the cost of living today as 2 1/3 times what it was in 1938. In that year, 63.2 per cent. of the families in Britain received under £5 a week, and 11.8 per cent. between £5 and £10. About the same time, John Strachey did some calculations—slightly tortuous, admittedly—in "The Theory and Practice of Socialism" to show that "the real earnings of the working class in 1934 were only 91.1 per cent., of what they were in 1900." The only conclusion is that the buying power of working people is much the same as it has always been—small; hire-purchase is the latest manifestation of the smallness.

One other aspect of hire-purchase needs to be mentioned. It helps to discipline the working class. The

man with heavy commitments—or the American worker who values his "credit rating"—is the man who must keep his job at all costs. Bernard Shaw's Andrew Undershaft preferred religious workmen because they were sober and honest and amenable; nowadays his ideal would be the employee buying a dining-room suite. The recent Government Economic Survey mentioned that more than a quarter of industrial operatives worked overtime last year, and it is a sad but fair comment that more than a quarter probably want to work overtime this year, too.

Ours is the age of mass-production. One would imagine it to be an age of plenty, but it is not so. It is a queer reflection that, in this world of science and power, the majority of people have to buy trashy products bit by bit and perhaps abstain from necessities in the process. Profit is often imagined as the greatest incentive to progress; in reality, it is the fetter. The hire-purchase system is a fresh pointer to the outstanding contradiction of capitalism: the inability of a productive system which has industrialized the world to perform the only real function of production—the satisfaction of people's needs.

R. COSTER.

## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

**Ealing Branch.** The special May campaign to increase the sales of the S.S. has got off to an exceptionally fine start. At the time of writing (the middle of the month) over 35 dozen copies have been sold, and everybody is confident that the target of 50 dozen will be more than realised before the end of the month. The regular canvassers have been heartened by the support of members new to this form of activity, who in turn have been agreeably surprised by the results obtained. The Branch Literature Committee are confident that there is no reason why these figures should not be further increased; all that is required is a steadily increasing number of members prepared to canvass. It is as easy for the Committee to organise a canvass with a dozen members, as it is to organise a party of six—and even more stimulating!

Approval of the Branch's scheme to distribute back copies of the S.S. has been given by the E.C., and several hundred have already been disposed of in this way. Members unable to canvass are asked to get in touch with the Branch Literature Secretary and offer their help in this form of literature activity.

The first of the Branch's propaganda excursions takes place on Sunday, 5th June, when two cars will be taking members to Southsea. Other meetings will follow in the course of the season.

Finally, will all members note that outdoor meetings will be held, weather permitting, every Saturday afternoon, at Ealing Green. Please give your support, if you can.

**Bradford Branch** say that their canvassing drive at Dewsbury is still going strong. They report that they sell four to five dozen STANDARDS each month (not three

dozen as mentioned in April) and of the former, three dozen STANDARDS are sold to regular readers.

**May Day** arrangements in London and the Provinces were hampered through the very bad weather. In London the Hyde Park meetings were cancelled but despite this, there was a good audience in the evening at Conway Hall, where Comrades May and Coster gave very interesting talks on May Day and aims and objects of the Party.

Reports are not in from Glasgow, but we understand that very good evening meetings were held there.

Nottingham Branch report that Comrades Keys and Warlow addressed about 250 workers on Market Square on the Saturday before May Day, the meeting lasted from 7 to 10 p.m. On the Sunday morning the "Nottingham Labour Day Demonstration" was held, although it was raining heavily. Our speakers attempted to hold a meeting but the rain forced them to abandon it. A good meeting, however, was held for about an hour, between heavy rain showers, in the afternoon. About 10s. worth of literature was sold during the two days. Branch members find that Market Square is a good station for propaganda meetings and they are aware of sympathetic interest from the audience.

**Swansea Branch** has not been in a position to hold any propaganda meetings during the last four months, but their activities have been directed in writing to the Press—letters stating the Party's Object have appeared in the *South Wales Evening Post*, *Llanelli Star*, *Neath Guardian*, *Western Mail* and *Swansea Voice*. An attempt is also being made to advertise the Party's literature in the *Swansea Voice*.

P. H.



## NOTES BY THE WAY

### Whose May Day?

At one time May Day was an occasion on which workers demonstrated international solidarity and drew attention to current claims and grievances. Such May Day meetings were frowned upon by governments and employers, but things are different now. Many governments have taken over May Day and from the side of the workers the demonstrations are often nationalist not internationalist. The following are reports of May Day activities in various countries.

#### CELEBRATIONS IN MOSCOW

"Moscow, May 1st.  
"Four giant new cannon, which might be capable of firing atomic shells, took part to-day in Moscow's traditional May Day military parade. The emphasis in planning the parade was on air power, but because of low cloud and steady rain there was no fly-past."—(*Manchester Guardian*, 2/5/55.)  
"CHINA.—Buddhist monks and nuns in long, flowing saffron and red robes marched with long columns of workers past Mao Tse-tung and other Chinese Communist leaders.  
"Mr. Harry Pollitt, Secretary-General of the British Communist Party, was among the foreign guests.  
"The Mayor of Peking, Peng Chen, called for the strengthening of national defences and opposing of American 'occupation of our sacred territory of Formosa.' Balloons with 'Free Formosa' slogans were carried."—(*Daily Mail*, 2/5/55.)

"GERMANY.—East Germany's growing armed forces were paraded in the Soviet sector of Berlin in a giant demonstration evidently designed to impress Berliners with the Communist capacity to counter West German rearmament.  
"West German trade unionists at mass meetings issued a demand for a 40-hour week to replace the present 48-hour week."—(*Daily Mail*, 2/5/55.)

"GREECE.—'Free Cyprus' was the theme of May Day in Athens, with prayers in churches calling for Divine blessing on the 'liberation struggle'."—(*Daily Mail*, 2/5/55.)

#### THE POPE BLESSES WORKERS MAY DAY IN ROME

From our Correspondent

Rome, May 1st.  
"Labour Day was celebrated with great pomp in Rome, where the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Italian Workers' Catholic Association (A.C.L.I.) was made to synchronise with it. Some 150,000 Catholic workers from all over Italy made a pilgrimage to St. Peter's, where they were addressed this afternoon by the Pope.  
"The Pope, who came down to St. Peter's Square to bless the workers, announced the institution of a new feast, that of St. Joseph the Workman, with which Labour Day will henceforth be celebrated by the Church. He said that he did this in order that May 1st might receive Christian baptism, so that, 'far from being a stimulus for discord, hate, and violence,' it should be 'a recurring invitation to modern society to accomplish that which is still lacking for social peace.'"  
—(*Manchester Guardian*, 2/5/55.)

#### MAY 1, "LOYALTY DAY"

Washington, April 28th.  
"President Eisenhower to-day proclaimed May 1st as loyalty day and called on citizens to observe it 'by reaffirming their loyalty to our beloved country'."—*Reuter*.—(*Manchester Guardian*, 29/4/55.)

### More Prisoners, in Worse Prisons

There are more people in prison today than there were before the war and more than at the beginning of the century. In the debate on Prisoners in the House of Lords on 4th May, 1955, Lord Pakenham commented on the decline of the number of people in prisons and Borstal institutions from 24,000 in 1953 to 21,000 at the

present time, but added: "There is still nearly twice the pre-war figure of about 11,000."

His figures related to England and Wales only. The total for the United Kingdom, after adding Scottish and Northern Ireland prisons, was 13,005 in 1938 and 26,224 in 1952. (See "Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1954, pages 58-68).

A corresponding figure representing the daily average prison population for the years 1900-1904 was 18,775, and the number in 1913-14 was 17,056. ("English Prisons Today," Brockway, p. 28).

In the House of Lords debate Lord Templewood, who has long been active as a prison reformer, regretted that our "Welfare State" has not dealt with this problem "in a common sense and urgent manner." He said that though "over the last generation we have had a series of great prison reformers . . . in certain respects, particularly in the matter of accommodation and work, so far from making any progress in a world in which a great deal of progress has been made in other walks of life, we have actually fallen back, I would almost say 50 or 60 years." (Col. 758.)

He went on:—

"To-day there exists a thing unheard of in the days when I or my predecessors were connected with the Home Office. No fewer than 4,595 prisoners are confined three in a cell; they are shut up in that cell about tea-time in the afternoon, and left there with nothing to do until the following morning. A state of affairs like that would have horrified the great penal reformers of the past, who made our system one of the best in the world."

Lord Huntingdon thought that something should be done, "not only from the humanitarian or Christian standpoint," but also from the economic point of view—the cost of prisons is nearly £10 million a year and this could be reduced if the prisoners did more useful work. He described appalling sanitary conditions which would be a "disgrace to a Hottentot village."

Lord Chorley said:—

"There are still in existence jails which were condemned long before the First World War and which are not fit to house swine, let alone human beings."

### Taxing the Rich out of Existence?

For half a century the Labour Party has been lamenting the existence of the very rich and promising to do something to end, or at least to diminish, inequality of property ownership. The rich themselves and the Tory Party joined with the Labour Party in agreeing that as a fact, whether desirable or not, the rich were disappearing. From time to time, however students of the subject intervene to point out that extermination by taxation had plainly failed and the rich were still with us, not noticeably reduced or inconvenienced.

It is a fact that the concentration of property ownership in the hands of a very small minority has not been materially altered by the ups and downs, war and crises of the past half century.

A special correspondent of the "Times Review of Industry" (April 1955, page 109) has been analysing the report of the Inland Revenue Department and has drawn some interesting conclusions.

Dealing with duties levied on properties left at death

he remarks on the very large proportion of the total payments that came from the small number of large estates: "This year 97 per cent. of the total duty was paid by 16,514 estates (those over £10,000), and 5,205 estates (those over £25,000) paid 87 per cent."

The year in question was 1953-4, in which there were in all 71,510 estates that paid duty (estates under £2,000 are not included in these figures as they paid no duty in that year).

The writer of the article had forecast a year ago that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would receive less revenue from estate duties. This turned out to be wrong and the Chancellor actually received £10 million more than on the previous year. Part of this increase is attributed to the rise in share prices on the Stock Exchange—"no doubt the rise in stock market values has helped to swell the capital value of estates . . ."

The writer makes an estimate from the official figures of the income and property of the wealthiest group, those with income above £12,000 (before tax) and with estates above £250,000.

He finds that this group (at present numbering about 2,900) have investments worth £1,300 million. The net income of the group (after paying tax) is about £10 million a year whereas the same group are paying out on estate duty some £40 million a year. In spite of this, he writes, "the class is by no means declining in numbers . . ."

and note his final comment:—

"No doubt in many instances the high taxation is offset by tax-free capital profits, but even so the steady increase of a class which, in theory, is being taxed out of existence shows the remarkable resilience of capital in a welfare State."

## ALBERT GRANT

ON Friday morning of April 15th a small number of Party members met at the Marylebone Crematorium to witness the passing of the late Comrade Albert Grant, who has died at the age of 55.

Many comrades who knew him for years will be shocked at the sad news.

By coincidence it just happens that I knew him many years ago. We were boys together in Lansbury's old Herald League at the Manor House, Finsbury Park, in the days of the first world war.

Several young people flocked to Lansbury's pacifist banner during 1915-17, and a vigorous and growing propaganda was carried on. With the end of the war the Herald League virtually broke up. The discordant elements, which had sunk differences, gravitated towards the Labour Party, Communist Party, and branches of the I.L.P.

I think I am correct in saying that, out of over 600 members on the books of the North London Herald League in 1918, two joined the S.P.G.B. One was Albert Grant who remained, until the day he died, a staunch, loyal, unwavering revolutionary Socialist.

Well do I remember how much moral courage it required to stand out alone amongst the horde of supporters of reformism of various kinds, whether the romantic variety of the C.P., or the pale pink I.L.P. Comrade Grant, though still a boy, philosophically accepted all the good-humoured banter, and a great deal of ill-humoured

### Crime in America

"The crime rate in the United States rose in 1954 for the seventh consecutive year, Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reported to-day. Major crimes committed last year numbered 2,267,250.

The statistics, published in the bureau's annual crime report, showed that the crime rate has increased by 26.7 per cent since 1950, while the population increased by seven per cent. in the same period. On an average day last year an estimated 34 persons were feloniously slain and 256 other felonious assaults were committed; 49 rapes occurred; 3,674 larcenies were committed; 592 cars were stolen; and there were 185 robberies and 1,422 burglaries." (*Manchester Guardian*, 26.4.1955.)

### Mental Illness Hits One in Twenty

The following is taken from a report in the *Manchester Guardian* (24 March, 1955) of an address given by Mr. Walter Maclay, of the Ministry of Health, at a Mental Health Research Fund Meeting at the Mansion House on the previous evening:—

"Nearly half of all the institutional beds available for all forms of illness, he said, were, in fact, required for patients suffering from mental illness. Anything from 10 to 30 per cent. of all patients seen in general practice were not suffering from physical illness at all, but from some form of psychotic or neurotic condition. One in 20 of all children born would spend some time in a mental hospital. It was most important in the national interest that more should be found out about the causes of such illness and how to cure and prevent it. Research was going on continuously, but it was not enough—it was the object of the Research Fund to provide more opportunities for such research in related fields and, if possible, to co-ordinate them."

H.

giving and epithets ("Impossibilist!" "Small Party of Good Boys") and "jokes" which still pass for wit in similar circles to-day.

Calm, genial, and urbane, he invariably gave, as good as he got from those disagreeing with him, without ever losing composure. He was always sure of respect, if not support.

Shortly after the first war, he went to South Africa and was a first-hand witness of the bitter struggles occurring on the Rand before returning home. During the Second World War he was frequently to be found, when circumstances permitted, supporting the Party platform in Hyde Park.

In the Second World War, as the First, he had no doubts whatever about the strength and validity of the Party's attitude.

A clear logical thinker, he could be relied on for sound advice in changing situations. Members of Hampstead were accustomed to seeing him regularly at the White-stone Road on Sunday mornings in recent years, where his acid comments on the absurdities from opponent's platforms frequently enlivened the scene.

The Party has lost a loyal and dependable member; many members a dear and respected friend.

To his wife and children we extend the hand of sympathy in time of trouble.

Though many may step forward to fill the gap he leaves vacant, to those who knew and loved him, it will never be filled.

HARRY YOUNG.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JUNE,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## SLUMS DOUBLED SINCE 1933

IN their election manifesto, "United for Peace and Progress," the Conservatives promised to start a programme for clearing the slums and aiming to re-house "at least 200,000 people a year from them." (P. 23).

As the Conservative Minister of Housing, Mr. Duncan Sandys, put the probable number of slum houses at a million (*Manchester Guardian*, 12/1/55) and as you can reckon that there are between three and four million people living in that million slum houses, it would take a very long time to clear the existing slums at the rate proposed. And in the meantime more slums will have appeared out of the other millions of old and dilapidated houses.

The Conservative manifesto went on to make the claim that "there has been only one full-scale slum clearance drive in British history, and that was when Conservatives were in office in the late 'thirties."

But, according to the Labour Party's "Handbook 1951" (p. 234), that Conservative slum clearance programme had closed or demolished only 245,000 slums by March, 1939, so that nearly half of the original 1933 estimate of 472,000 slums were still being lived in.

It will be observed that, according to this estimate, there are about four times as many slums now as there were in 1939 and double the number that existed in 1933.

Slum clearance fares no better in New York according to an article by Mr. Gerard Fay in the *Manchester Guardian* (9 May, 1955). There, too, they plan to abolish the slums and "the housing now planned, when built, will be a victory over a problem which must once have seemed insoluble, but it will be far from total victory."

"At the end of 1952 there were still 426,792 apartments in the city which were more than 50 years old.

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD June, 1955

This does not sound alarming by European standards but New York tenements more than 50 years old, especially in Manhattan, are often below, far below, any decent housing standard."

He writes of "the more than a 100,000 apartments in New York which have no private bath or toilet . . . an equal number which have no running water or are classified as 'dilapidated,' . . . the more than 50,000 which have cold water only."

Lastly, "the housing shortage could be ended and the slum problem finally solved only by building something like 400,000 apartments. The present plans fall far below this ideal."

## SPRING SONG AFTER AN ELECTION

Another Election has come and gone,  
The tumult's ended, the shouting's done,  
Tweedledum's lost, and Tweedledee's won,  
Loud sing cuckoo!  
Lib., Lab., Con.,—and C.P. too,  
Made up a right reformist crew,  
Dispensing the usual vote-catching brew,  
Loud sing cuckoo!  
Liberal and Tory, C.P. and Lab.,  
All full of promises, all full of gab,  
Labour with 'Erbie, Tories with Rab,  
Loud sing cuckoo!  
Sugar and soft soap again the rule,  
Kissing the babies, playing the fool,  
Nice glossy photos to make the girls drool,  
Loud sing cuckoo!  
Candidates handsome, candidates plain,  
Candidates pleasing with might and main,  
All to keep capitalism running again,  
Loud sing cuckoo!  
All the old catcheries out once more,  
Canvassers knocking at every front door,  
First they'd been seen since the barney before,  
Loud sing cuckoo!  
Street-corner meetings, things of the past,  
Democracy's symbol's a radio mast,  
Now its the "telly"—with all star cast,  
Loud sing cuckoo!  
Millions of workers put down their crosses,  
Applauded the "gains," regretted the "losses,"  
Fine difference it made, they still work for bosses,  
Loud sing cuckoo!  
So the farcical game goes on,  
Tweedledum's lost and Tweedledee's won,  
Another Election has come and gone,  
Loud sing cuckoo!

S. H.

## THE QUESTION

On January 7 the magistrate of Clerkenwell Court was asked: "The railways are public property, aren't they?" and he gave the following answer:—

"The nationalised railways don't belong to you and they don't belong to me. They may belong to us—in a peculiar kind of way."

Now, dear reader, :if they do not belong to me and do not belong to you, it is obvious that they do not belong to the plural pronoun, us, just as the National Consolidated Debt does not belong to us.

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD June, 1955

## A PEEP INTO THE ART WORLD

THE *Financial Times* (27/4/55) has an article under the title "High Prices for Venetians"; dealing with the spectacular rise in prices of works of art sold in London Sale Rooms, instancing a painting by Canaletto £10,500, a pair of F. Guardi £9,000, one by Zuccarelli £1,900, one by F. Post "View in Brazil 1661" £1,650, and a very fine copy of Audubon's "Birds of America," published 1827-1838, £9,200. These prices represent a ten to 20 times increase in the last 10 to 20 years. What a fine racket thinks the speculator, better than whiskey, or bomb making.

What is behind it, you may wonder. While one must remember the fall in the purchasing power of the pound, that is not the great part. The supply of such works of art are as these mentioned above grows less each year, but the demand increases with the growth of immense fortunes in countries that did well in the last two world wars: the South American Republics, the Scandinavian countries, U.S.A., and also the great oil fortunes in Western Canada. The last are a great factor in the prices of Canadian paintings by Krieghoff (painted 100 years ago) which sell at as much as £1,000 as against £100 in pre-war days.

S. America is coming up fast and it was Brazil that put on the San Paulo collection at the Tate Gallery last year. F. Post was one of the very few well trained artists to go to Brazil in the 17th century, so for buyers of S. American early art the choice is strictly limited; the £1,650 "View in Brazil" could be bought 20 years ago for £100 and the Audubon book for a tenth of the recent price.

The present writer's memory goes back to a day in January at the winter Royal Academy Show of 18 Century Art, to Exhibit 361, "Making a Road," a painting by J. Vernet, signed and dated 1774. The picture shows a French Landscape by a river with a castle in the distance, a three-arched bridge being built in mid-distance by many

workers with a high wooden crane. Up on the right is a windmill with two donkeys being loaded, beyond the bridge a group of men pulling a long waggon filled with huge blocks of stone, and all along the road dozens of men with hammers, picks, ramrods, chisels, etc., constructing the road. In the foreground are four horsemen. The first, splendidly dressed, is looking at a document that the ganger, hat in hand, has given to him, on the pommel of his saddle a brace of pistols. By his side another well dressed and pistoled gent sits with whip held erect in his hand and behind him two men, who look like guards. While admiring the picture another visitor approached and remarked: "Nice picture! Who owns these beautiful things? Who were they painted for?" This one, I replied, now belongs to The Louvre, but you will notice by the catalogue the great array of Lords, Baronets, etc., who own the bulk of this splendid exhibition. As to who this Vernet was painted for, perhaps for the pistoled gent or at least someone such as the owner of the distant castle. What you see there in the painting—well over 50 men working and two well armed gents not working but obviously of the class who own the means of production—sums up nicely who owned such works of art and who owns them now. There stands the master class whip and pistol in hand: the pistol you put and keep in their hands every time you vote them into political power and the whip of necessity that keeps you working for those who own the means whereby you live. The fine art trade, like the fine jewel trade, is patronised almost exclusively by that very small class who own the means of wealth production; while the vast bulk of the people get a trickle of chain store art and "fine" jewelry. It is up to the latter, the working class, to say yes or no to such a system. Look at the world you live in and get an understanding of Socialism, which will finish all the luxury racket and make possible a world in which art will cease to serve the ostentation and speculation of the wealthy and be a means of enjoyment for all.

E. K.

## PRISONER'S STORY

IN the summer of 1953 Rupert Croft-Cooke, a novelist by profession, was arrested on a charge of homosexuality. A few months later he appeared before the Quarter Sessions at Lewes, was found guilty on some charges and not guilty on others, and sentenced to nine months imprisonment. Apart from a few days at Brixton he served out his sentence (actually six months, allowing for remission) in Wormwood Scrubs. His book, "The Verdict of You All," is the story of his experiences there.

Rupert Croft-Cooke, to judge by the scraps of personal information scattered throughout his book, has not been too hardly dealt with by life. Well-educated, much-travelled, a lover of things good to eat and drink, he was living a well-ordered and comfortable existence in the Sussex countryside until he was rudely awakened one night by the village policeman and two detectives. These, after due observance of the usual legal ceremonial, took him off to the local police station, and from then on he

found himself in a world he had hardly known existed. "The Verdict of You All" records his reactions to, and observations of, this world into which he was so suddenly and so rudely thrown, an alien world inhabited by beings he had heard about only through the crime stories of newspapers, a world a million miles removed from the bright and comfortable surroundings he had been accustomed to enjoy.

To those who cherish comforting delusions about the wonderful reforms that are supposed to have been wrought in our prisons, this book will come as a shock. The tale told by the author is of a penal system grim, drear, unimaginative, mean, and degrading—to prisoner and keeper alike. It tells only of Wormwood Scrubs and Brixton, the first a prison for first offenders serving sentences of six months and over, the second for men sentenced to less than six months. Only briefly and occasionally does he make mention of places such as Dart-



moor, most notably on the occasion when some of its inmates were sent up to the Scrubs to receive their annual visits from relatives unable to make the journey to Princetown. To the author these men conveyed

"by their very appearance and movements, dark horrors suffered, depths of evil and desperation, which the Star prisoners of Wormwood Scrubs had never known."

Yet the picture he draws of even a Star prison like Wormwood Scrubs is frightening in its grimness; and of Brixton, which he thinks is much worse, he is vitriolic. This is his account of the sight that met him on his entry for the first time into Wormwood Scrubs:—

"A long interior street on each side of which are rows of identical cell doors. The floor of this street is of concrete, the doors are blank and painted a dull cream with formidable black bolts on each and a small eye-hole. The street is a hundred yards long, lit with naked not-too-powerful electric bulbs and running down to iron railings and a gated wall at the far end. . . . There was, as we entered, complete silence in this grim and ugly street and it was hard to realise that behind each of the uniform doors was a man in a cell."

There are four floors like this, each containing 80 cells. At the level of the first floor is stretched wire-netting to lessen the risk of suicide from those throwing themselves over from the upper floors, and also prevent injury from articles dropped intentionally from above. The author adds:—

"A prison 'hall' realises the hopes of its original architect for it is probably the ugliest structure ever conceived by man. . . . From entry to discharge the prisoner never sees anything inanimate which is not positively ugly, and of living things there is nothing on which the eye can bear to dwell, except occasionally the faces of some fellow-prisoners."

So much for Wormwood Scrubs. His description of Brixton is even more horrifying.

"It would be difficult to imagine and impossible to create a more rank and stagnant breeding-ground of evil than Brixton gaol. Life at the Scrubs was not without a certain gloomy dignity; a prisoner could pass his days there with no affront to his manhood and the men he met were often rumbustious sinners with a tale to tell. Here everything was mean and degrading—the very appearance of the place was grimed. . . .

"C Wing, in which most of the convicted men were

herded, was a 'hall' about half the size of those in the Scrubs, but housed more prisoners, since they were crammed three to a cell. This leads to the most filthy pollution. Imagine an airless cell, scarcely large enough for one man, filled with the bunks, the bodies, the clothes and the chamber-pots of three. If it were an ordinary bedroom or a ship's cabin it would be monstrously unhygienic, but when it is an almost windowless cell in which men are locked without respite from half-past five in the afternoon to seven o'clock the next morning it becomes foul and pestilential beyond all words. . . .

"The whole place stank. The cells at night were pigsties and the effect of this gloom and neglect on the wretched prisoners was evident. Abject creatures, for the most part they made no attempt to keep their spirits up, or show any of the generous geniality of men suffering together, but grumbled and blasphemed in the filthiest terms, abandoning themselves to the atmosphere of shame and abomination which filled the place like a cold miasma."

"The Verdict of You All" is a book of highly personal comment and description—one man's account of his experiences in prison. His account may be true, it may be false, it may be a mixture of the two. Every reader must be his own judge of the category in which it should be placed. The author is a novelist, has naturally a good command of words, can tell his story well. Inevitably, there must lurk a suspicion that harbouring a feeling of injustice (he strenuously denies that he was guilty of the charges brought against him) he may tell the story too well. In spite of himself, indignation may get the better of judgment. Resentment may carry him beyond the limit of accuracy. Situations, conditions, may become over-coloured. In the last analysis, only those who have themselves been subjected to his experiences can confirm or deny his story.

This much, however, can be said: If it is, in fact, an essentially reliable and authentic account of life as it is actually lived in such prisons today, then it is a down-right, uncompromising challenge to all the fine words that have been said about the reforms in our penal system. If it is but half true, it is a grim and sorry reflection on the efforts of those reformers who have laboured over the years to improve conditions in our prisons.

S. H.

## THE FILMS

### "The Prisoner" (Plaza)

*The Prisoner* is based on Bridget Boland's play of the same name which had a short run in London a few months ago. The play, which was one of the very few worthwhile serious plays shown in London in the past year or so, had two of the main characters in common with the film—Alec Guinness as the Cardinal and Wilfred Lawson as the warder. The interrogator, the other principal character, is played in the film by Jack Hawkins.

It is a story of a Cardinal in an iron curtain country who has fallen foul of the regime by his outspokenness. The authorities, however, are unable to merely arrest and liquidate him owing to his fame and popularity, and it is therefore necessary for them to extort from the prisoner a confession of crimes sufficient to discredit him and to ensure his fall from public favour. In the words of the interrogator: "You are a public monument and that monument must be—defaced."

The story, then, deals with the efforts of the interrogator to discover the chink in the Cardinal's armour that will enable him to break down his resistance and eventually bring about his public recantation and "confession." The



interrogation takes months and although the prisoner is subjected to no actual physical torture, his spirit is broken by solitary confinement, the complete absence of sunlight and other well-thought-out "psychological" methods of torture. Inevitably the chink in the armour is discovered and exploited and the State triumphs, although the interrogator discovers in the process that he himself is not free from pity, and is bringing about his own destruction as much as the prisoner's. The interrogator's method of breaking the prisoners' will (or "curing him" as the interrogator puts it) and the Cardinal's struggles to thwart him make a fascinating, although horrifying, study.

Any other conclusion to the story would have been dishonest for, in fact, in the so-called "Communist peoples' democracies" the State has always triumphed.

Bridget Boland has also written the script for the film and, unfortunately, has been prevailed upon to embellish the severity of the play with some romantic interest and some other tiresome, Hollywoodesque, film conventions, presumably at the instance of the box-office experts. The action of the play took place completely in the interrogation room and in the prisoner's cell, but there are a number of outside episodes added to the film that are both distracting and pointless. For instance, there is the disjointed love story of one of the police-warders; then a young boy is shot by the police while chalking "Freedom" signs on a wall; a gun-battle breaks out between troops and an armed man in a house; a subversive journalist is arrested in a cafe; and so on. The addition of these episodes ruins the original unity of the play, and makes the film crudely anti-Communist, sprawling and inconsequential. Less reprehensible, perhaps, is the addition of the Cardinal's arrest in the cathedral and the trial. Both are quite effective but again, add little to the unity and point of the original.

The political trials that have taken place in Russia and the other so-called "Communist" countries generally follow a consistent pattern. At the trial the accused generally gives an abject "confession"; admits to all his crimes; extolls the virtues of the leaders of the party; admits the complete wrongness of his thought and sometimes even demands that the maximum penalty be exacted for the benefit of the people he is confessing that he has betrayed! A few extracts from the accounts of some of these trials should be sufficient to demonstrate this.

Trial of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others. (Russia, 1936):—

"Vishinsky: How is one to judge the articles and declarations which you wrote in 1933 and in which you expressed devotion to the Party? As deceit?

Kamenev: No, worse than deceit.

Vishinsky: Breach of faith?

Kamenev: Worse.

Vishinsky: Worse than deceit, worse than breach of faith. Do you find this word? Is it treachery?

Kamenev: You have said it.

Vishinsky: Zinoviev, do you confirm this?

Zinoviev: Yes."

Trial of Traicho Kostov and others. (Bulgaria, 1949):—

Kostov: "So I repeat, I plead guilty of nationalist deviation in relation to the Soviet Union, which deserves a most severe punishment"—and—"I must confess that my readiness to put myself at the disposal of the British Intelligence Service was due partly to my left-sectarian, Trotskyist convictions of the past as well as to my capitulation before the police in 1942. . . ."

Nikola Nachev at the same trial:—

"Citizen Judges, having fully realised my criminal and hostile activities, carried on by me against my Fatherland and the Bulgarian people, I have described these activities in my written depositions before the People's Militia. I will now tell you about what I did and what I know, so that the criminal conspiracy in which I also participated may be revealed. . . ."

One could go on quoting indefinitely this kind of thing. No one in their right mind could accept these confessions as being genuine and it is impossible not to feel uneasy when thinking of the methods which must be resorted to in order to obtain them. George Orwell in "Nineteen Eighty-Four" has, perhaps, described these methods in their ultimate form. For example, when O'Brien is explaining to Winston Smith the methods and ideals of the party he says, "Shall I tell you why we have brought you here? To cure you! To make you sane! Will you understand, Winston, that no one whom we bring to this place ever leaves our hands uncured? We are not interested in those stupid crimes that you have committed. The Party is not interested in the overt act; the thought is all we care about. We do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them."

It is ironical to think that after thousands of years of human progress, a large part of the world's population exists without even those elementary freedoms that the workers in this country possess, but this in itself does not justify despair, for though tragic failures, the Berlin riots and the Vorkuta rising are two signs that the "Communist" dictatorships do show cracks.

However, to return to the film. It merits a visit in spite of its faults, not only because of the superb acting performances of the three principals, but also because it throws some light on one of the most remarkable social phenomena of our time:—the political trial.

A. W. I.

## THE FRUIT OF ILLUSION

IN the American periodical *The Nation* (April 23rd) an article appears by G. D. H. Cole. It is a very pessimistic article. Cole considers that the Socialist movement has lost its way and is not what it was when he joined it long ago in the days of Jaures, Kautsky, Keir Hardie, and the Webbs. His principal disappointment concerns the International aspect of the movement and the national concentration upon ends that are not Socialist. In the early part of his article Cole writes:

"When I joined the Socialist movement in England, it never occurred to me to doubt that I was accepting an international obligation and a loyalty that transcended national frontiers. My task, as I saw it, was to play my small part in a great crusade for human brotherhood that would make an end of the exploitation of man by man and of country by country, destroying capitalism and imperialism together and putting in their place a world society set free from war and hatred to devote its energies and vast resources to banishing poverty and slavery from every country."



He then goes on to ask "Where are that task and those efforts now?"; and he claims that since 1917 there have been "two sharply antagonistic movements, each claiming to be the torch-bearer of the true Socialism but at bitter conflict about the means of advancing towards their goal and even about the goal itself." Cole did not go far enough back. The trouble started long before 1917. It started with the groups he thought so much of in his early days—the German and English Social Democratic Parties, the Fabian Society, the Independent Labour Party, and, finally, the Labour Party. It was their concentration upon "immediate aims," which included a multitude of reforms, that landed the movement in the morass in which it finds itself to-day. The result is a logical development of the early policy. But Cole can't see this; he wants to go back and start all over again the policies that can only bear its present fruit. His disappointment is the result of his failure to grasp the essential difference between a revolutionary and a reformist policy, and the inevitable result of the latter.

Later on in his article he writes, referring to the cleavage between the Social Democratic and the Communist movement:

"I have never been able to accept as final this sharp cleavage in what I still think of as fundamentally a single world-wide movement against oppression. I am no Communist, for I detest the suppression of all free thinking which Communists not only regard as needful, but seem positively to admire. I hate cruelty, rigid discipline, and the vindictive mistrust which the Communist philosophy appears to involve. I cannot, however, for that reason consent to regard the peoples of the Communist countries, or the Communists of my own or other countries, as enemies with whom I have nothing in common. I have much in common with them. I share their wish to help all the subject peoples of the world to emancipate themselves from foreign imperialist rule; I admire their planned economies and their vast achievements in economic construction; and I see them, on one condition, as advancing, however deviously, toward a classless society and an expansion of freedom for the ordinary man and woman in the affairs of everyday living. The one condition is, of course, that they escape from the ever-present peril of utterly destructive world war, fear of which poisons their behaviour and forbids them luxuries of common honesty and decent tolerance."

The above is some measure of Cole's lack of insight, and how much the fear of war has clouded his vision. To suggest that fear of world war is a determining factor in the behaviour and the dishonesty of the leaders of the Russian Communist Party is just nonsense. Their reformism, their twisting of Marxism, their internal strife and their mutual wiping out of each other, is based on far more than that. And Cole's admiration of their achievements is in line with his own life-long support of reformism. His description of the present position of the Social Democrats is interesting from two points of view; he recognises the position of futility they have reached but he also accepts that Socialism does include "national endeavours to advance gradually." Here is his description:

"I am assuredly no Communist. But no more am I a Democratic Socialist if this means renouncing the Socialist revolution and reducing socialism to a set of independent electoral movements designed to gain parliamentary majorities with the support of non-Socialist voters. I do not deny the need for parliamentary action, but I do deny that Socialism means no more than a number of national endeavours to advance gradually and constitutionally toward the welfare state. Even where nominally Socialist parties have gained majority support, they have never attempted to establish Socialism; even their attempts to further welfare have shown signs of petering out after their initial successes, owing to the

difficulty of advancing further without disturbing the smooth working of the capitalist structure—to which they are supposed to be hostile—and the fear that by attacking it they will alienate marginal support. This seems to be the position in the Scandinavian countries, as well as in Great Britain."

He adds to the above that in Europe "the Democratic Socialist parties, in their fear of Communist aggression" seem to be prepared to acquiesce in rearmament, including atomic weapons and hydrogen bombs and finishes a paragraph about these measures with the following remarks:—

"They are being forced on the Socialist parties by a reactionary leadership that has come to be more anti-Communist than pro-Socialist and sees nothing amiss in turning to capitalist America as its ally against the Communists."

Cole then proceeds to outline his own position, stating at the outset that old Socialists like himself—"Internationalists and non-Communists"—find themselves in a terribly difficult position, faced with a conflict of loyalties, loyalty to their parties or loyalty to Socialism as an essentially international cause. The Labour Party, he says, has no clear vision of what to do and "its recent programmes have been quite remarkably ineffective and even trivial." And then he puts the question:—

"What, then, is to be done? The Socialism to which I was converted in my youth was the fruit of long, hard, and passionate thinking, subsequently translated into policies, not for the full establishment of a Socialist way of life, but for the first steps towards it."

Earlier he had claimed something was badly amiss "with the development of Socialist thought in face of the vast change in the problems mankind must face in order to progress, or even to survive." To meet this and to get out of the mess in which social democracy had landed he makes his proposals. Before doing so he gives voice to the deep-rooted feelings of the intellectual who has cursed the radical movement by his self-appointed function of leading the ignorant. Here is how he puts it:—

"Besides, mass parties cannot think; they can only be influenced by the thinking of individuals or small groups of people who are prepared to think for them."

and here is the thinking of one of those individuals:—  
"With these ideas in mind, I have come to the conclusion that an attempt should be made to establish internationally a small society, or order, of Socialists who would pledge themselves to do their best to restate the essentials of their Socialist faith in terms applicable to the present world situation. . . . The immediate task of this group would be not to act but to think together and to plan—to restate Socialist principles in relation to the most pressing contemporary problems, and to base on these principles a broad programme of action in which the various national movements could be called upon to play their part. Each member of the group, or order, would publicize its ideas in his own country and try to induce the national leaders to take them up."

So there we are, back to where the Labour Party came in, with the Fabian Society producing the ideas and policy that helped to lead them into the present mess. No fundamental change in outlook, just a different bottle to contain the same old illusions. And far from the problems having changed, they are just the same, only in one direction aircraft, mechanisation and the bomb, have replaced horse-drawn cannon and the maxim gun.

These are some of the practical suggestions Cole thinks come from this new group:—

"first, a clearly defined attitude toward the making and potential use of atomic weapons; second, a well-thought-out plan of campaign for a 'war upon want' designed to equalize, as nearly as possible, conditions of living in all countries; third, plans for a world economic structure that will avoid the evils both of capitalism and of bureaucratic

centralization and will open up for the workers in every country rapidly increasing opportunities for democratic, responsible self-government in their working lives; and fourth, the complete ending of imperialist domination, both political and economic, and the extension of self-governing independence to all peoples."

Here they are, the same old windy type of high-faluting propositions, the practical application of which would only land the proposers in the present position of the movement they have supported, and this is the result of a life-time of experience! The intellectual never learns, he only prophesies and proposes; then weeps at the result

and lays the blame on others.

When Cole started operations there was a party in existence which kept its course steadfastly to the accomplishment of Socialism and opposed all reformist policies. This Party was the Socialist Party of Great Britain, but Cole would have nothing to do with it because it opposed reformism. There is the World Socialist Party of America, and parties in other countries, which take the same line as we do, but Cole still ignores our existence, preferring to follow the path of reformist illusion.

GILMAC.

## CLASS AND COLOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA (Concluded)

### Hands off our workers

The South African Capitalist looks on the Negro not as competitive but as complementary. Already many Negroes have been drawn into industry as wage-workers; and those who have not form a valuable reserve on which to draw for future expansion, and to use as a threat in order to keep down wages. To the factory-owner in Cape Town or Durban, to the shareholder in the Rand mines or the Port Elizabeth car-assembly-works, Negro labour is an essential ingredient in his profits. He is, therefore, resolutely opposed to the Nationalists' schemes for apartheid.

The Government, although theoretically committed to apartheid, is thus faced with the fact that its opponents regard it as anathema, and that its own supporters are unenthusiastic about translating the ideal into the practical. Few whites are prepared to attack separate seating in buses or separate queues at the Post Office counter: but serious measures of apartheid have a much more mixed reception. Even the removal of the Sophiatown Natives to a distance of no more than 11 miles outside Johannesburg, with rail transport available to bring the workers into Johannesburg, has roused much hostility in English-speaking circles. British Capitalists sympathised with South African Capitalists over this interference with "their" workers, and British workers were able to enjoy the spectacle of the English Conservative Press apparently defending the rights of the South African proletariat.

### Stagnation of Industry

In all their seven years of power, the Nationalist Government have only produced one serious plan for apartheid. In the western part of Cape Province, the numbers of Negroes have increased since 1921 from 30,000 to 178,000. But in this area of South Africa, there was already a large population of Cape Coloured people. If apartheid was possible anywhere in South Africa, a start might be made on it here—so the Government reasoned—because even if the Bantu were removed, there would still be Cape Coloureds to do the work. Even this scheme, it will be noted, is not full-blown apartheid: for even if all the Negroes were forcibly ejected from western Cape Province, the whites would still rely on the Cape Coloured population; the Government did not dare propose that the Cape Coloureds too should be sacrificed to "apartness." As could have been expected, the plan came under heavy fire from the industrial interests. "The long-term Government plan for the removal of Africans from the western Cape which was announced on Friday

by Dr. Eiselen, the Secretary for Native Affairs, has received a hostile reception from the spokesmen of industry, which depends heavily on native labour. . . . The *Cape Times* to-day attacks the proposal on the ground that it is impracticable, as commerce, industry, and agriculture, are too dependent on African labour. . . . Natives at present do nearly all the unskilled labour in the western province. . . . The *Cape Times* also argues that, if the new policy is seriously implemented, it must be accompanied by a control of industry as drastic as in any totalitarian country to avoid increasing labour needs" (18-1-55). In Parliament a former Minister for Native Affairs strongly attacked the Eiselen plan "as impracticable and likely to depress the living standards of both Coloured and Europeans, through the stagnation of commerce and industry" (21-5-55).

### Where can it be done?

What was even more significant was that the proposal, although it was for only partial apartheid in only one part of a single province, and although the long-term nature of its implementation was stressed by Dr. Eiselen, received nothing more than lukewarm support from the Nationalist Party newspaper itself, *Die Burger*. *Die Burger*, the Nationalist newspaper, applauds the plan, but does not gloss over the difficulties. "Let us not be under any illusions," it says. "The natives are here because of the economy of the western province as it has evolved, and as it is to-day it needs their labour." . . . *Die Burger* sees this matter as an important and perhaps decisive test of apartheid. There are fewer Africans in the western Cape than elsewhere in the European areas, and the western Cape has a large coloured working population. If the plan to reduce the number of Negroes here fails, where in South Africa, *Die Burger* asks, can it be done, and what then of the policy of progressive territorial separation?" (18-1-55).

The Nationalists receive electoral support not only from the Afrikaner farmers but also from the "poor whites" in the towns. These failures of white society listen eagerly to a party which proclaims that, low as they are, they can still look down on men of a different coloured skin. And those of them who work for wages fear that the Negroes will soon be able to do their jobs for less pay. With these people "apartheid" is a valuable rallying-cry for the Nationalists. But the landed interest is the mainstay of the Nationalist Party, and in the long run determines its policy. In these circumstances it seems probable that thorough-going apartheid will remain a word



on the Nationalist banners rather than an item of their practical policy, just as in this country the Conservative Party, while remaining theoretically opposed to all nationalisation, nevertheless makes no effort to restore the coal mines and the railways to their private owners.

#### Education

The difference of opinion between the landed class and the industrial interest over apartheid or the lack of it is then, perhaps, more apparent than real. But there are other issues where the two classes are divided by a deep gulf. Whereas the Afrikaner farmer will not hear of African ownership of land outside the Native Reserves, the capitalist has no such objection to it. Indeed, a worker who feels he has a stake in the country by his ownership of his house and garden is often a better worker than the completely propertyless man. He is rooted to one spot, and is less likely to go off to another job, leaving his employer with the trouble of training a successor. He can only buy a house with the help of a mortgage, and a worker who has regular repayments to make is less likely to go on strike than one who hasn't. On this question, then, there is a clear division of opinion.

But the self-interest of the two classes is most clearly in opposition in the sphere of education. In the eyes of the Afrikaner the Negro is and must remain merely a hewer of wood and a drawer of water; he should have the very little education needed to fit him for his task, and no more. For more education would lead him to consider himself as good a man as the Afrikaner, and would tempt him to agitate for a share in the land of South Africa more consonant with his numbers. But the Britisher sees the Negro as a workman at a modern factory bench or conveyor-belt; and modern methods of production need skilled and educated workers. Which view is to prevail? In the long run, there seems little doubt that capitalism's inevitable demand for educated workers will become more vocal and will eventually carry the day; but at present, the Afrikaners seem to be trying to put their theories, in this field at least, into practice. As a start, the Nationalist Government is making a determined effort to get all education into its own hands. Under the Bantu Education Act, the subsidies which previous governments have paid to high schools and industrial schools, are to be cut immediately by a quarter of their former figure, and may ultimately be stopped altogether (8-1-55). The Act is designed to take native education out of the control of the provincial authorities and the English-speaking churches, and put it into that of the State. In the State-run schools, the Bantu will have a "special education"—that is to say, an education which the Afrikaners hope will ensure that they never rise above their present lowly status.

Mr. Strauss, leader of the United Party, indicated recently that his party might be prepared to accept a compromise on the Native question. "The Native as such," he remarked in a speech at Bloemfontein, "is not even a homogeneous entity. What is right for the primitive 'tribesman in Pondoland may be wrong for the educated and cultured Native professor. What would be necessary for the Native urban worker in Johannesburg would not be desirable for the labour tenant on the Transvaal platteland" (13-1-55). This naive "You do what you want with your workers if we can do what we want with ours" offer has so far, it seems, awakened no response among the Nationalists.

#### Religion

The question of education is bound up with the question of religion. As usual, each of these two contending upper classes has the support of its own churches. The Afrikaners' church is the Dutch Reformed Church, of which, it will be remembered, the former Prime Minister Malan, Doctor of Theology, was a pastor. The divines of this Church bend their energies to demonstrate, with the aid of Biblical quotation, how the white man is by nature superior to the black, and how he is thus clearly designated, in the eternal order of things laid down by the Almighty, to rule over him. This kind of rubbish is refuted by the Anglican and Catholic Churches, which depend for their existence on the support of the capitalist class; they therefore select other Biblical quotations to show that the Bantu, with the help of and under the suzerainty of the particular church concerned, can become a reliable and responsible member of society. In mid-twentieth-century South Africa this means, in effect, that he can become a trustworthy wage-slave. The English-speaking churches are supported in this by their brethren overseas: many British clergymen have been able to gain a cheap reputation for liberality by descending on the evils of the Nationalist administration in South Africa, while closing their eyes to the exploitation of the workers on their own doorsteps.

#### Colour and Class

The colour problem in South Africa is not distinct and separate from the other problems which arise inevitably out of a society which is based on private property. Under Socialism there will be no landowner, no capitalist, no poor white, no "worker": there will be no fear of competition for land or for jobs, no fear of a rival class, no fear of loss of dividend, and therefore none of the hatred to which these fears give rise. When South Africans understand and want Socialism, their hatred for persons of a different colour will disappear; for no man, black or white, can continue any longer in his hatred when he understands the real reasons for it. To treat the colour-bar as an issue outside of and beyond the class-struggle, and to believe that it can receive any real solution while the class-divisions in society remain unresolved, is to stultify oneself at the very outset. The answer to South Africa's problems is the same as the answer to the problems of Britain, America, Russia: it is the introduction of a Socialist system of society.

JOSHUA.

### WORK AND LEISURE

"Leisure," he said, "if people only knew: Its the most precious thing a man can have and they are such fools they don't even know its something to aim at. Work? They work for work's sake. They haven't got the brains to realise that the only object of work is to obtain leisure."

"Most people, the vast majority in fact, lead the lives that circumstances have thrust upon them, and though some repine, find themselves square pegs in round holes and think that if things had been different they might have made a much better showing. The greater part accept their lot, if not with serenity, at all events with resignation. They are like trams travelling for ever on the self-same rails. They go backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards inevitably till they can no longer and then are sold as scrap iron..."

From "Lotus Eaters," by Somerset Maugham.)

#### PAMPHLETS

"The Socialist Party and War"	1/- (Post free 1/2)
"Russia Since 1917"	1/- " " 1/2
"The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years"	1/- " " 1/2
"The Racial Problem—A Socialist Analysis"	1/- " " 1/2
"Socialism"	4d. " " 6d.
"Socialism or Federal Union?"	4d. " " 6d.
"The Socialist Party: Its Principles and Policy"	4d. " " 6d.
"Is Labour Government the Way to Socialism?"	4d. " " 6d.
"Nationalisation or Socialism?"	6d. " " 8d.

All obtainable from the Literature Committee,  
52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

#### GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

#### VISIT TO BRIGHTON

West Ham Branch will pay a visit to Brighton on 3rd July, 1955, and hold a meeting in conjunction with Brighton Branch at the Fish Market. All members and friends are welcome. Approx. cost 11/- per head. Those interested please communicate with K. Hollanders, 5, York Road, Ilford, Essex. Tel. ILF 2884.

#### DEWSBURY

To readers of the SOCIALIST STANDARD in Dewsbury.  
Bradford and District Branch meets 22nd May, 728, Leeds Road, Shaw Cross, Dewsbury, for discussion.

#### LEYTON LECTURES

at  
GROVE HOUSE, LEYTON HIGH ROAD  
at 8 p.m.  
Monday, 13th June: (Title to be announced)—  
F. OFFORD.  
Monday, 27th June: "Developments of Modern Capitalism"—E. WILLMOTT.  
Questions and Discussion.

#### BOREHAM WOOD

Will members and sympathisers willing to cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood contact:  
I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,  
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

#### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

#### OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA



##### SUNDAYS

Hyde Park	3 p.m.
East Street (Walworth)	June 6th 11 a.m.
" 13th	12.30
" 20th	11 a.m.
" 27th	12.30
Finsbury Park	11.30 a.m.
Whitestone Pond (Hampstead)	11.30 a.m.
Beresford Square (Woolwich)	8 p.m.

##### WEDNESDAYS

Gloucester Road Station	8 p.m.
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##### FRIDAYS

Station Road, Ilford	8 p.m.
Earls Court Station	8 p.m.

##### SATURDAYS

Jolly Butchers Hill (Nr. Wood Green Tube Stn.)	2.30 p.m. sharp
Ealing Green	3 p.m.
Rushcroft Road, Brixton	8 p.m.
Castle Street, Kingston	8 p.m.



## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP**—Secretary: R. Smith, 1, Littlejohn Street, Dundee. Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 1st, 15th and 29th June, 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**OLDHAM**—Group meets Wednesdays 8th and 22nd June, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

**ROMFORD**—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.). Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

**RUGBY**—Group meets alternate Mondays 13th and 27th June, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

**PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS**  
**PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2**  
Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

**SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.**  
Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist  
Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee  
at the Head Office or to a local branch.

**DARTFORD LECTURES**  
at  
**LABOUR CLUB, LOWFIELD STREET, DARTFORD**  
at 8 p.m.  
Friday, 10th June: "Peruvian Civilisation"—  
R. AMBRIDGE.  
Friday, 8th July: "Emergence of Socialism"—  
S. CASH.

## SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to  
Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High  
Street, London, S.W.4.

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## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY**. Correspondence to Secretary. c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., meets at 7.30 p.m., 2nd and 16th June.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT**. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON**. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15.

**CROYDON** meets each month, 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Baling Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCELS** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM AND CHELSEA**. Correspondence and enquiries to Jon Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3. Outdoor meetings, Gloucester Road, Wednesday evenings, 8 p.m. and Earls Court, Friday evenings, 8 p.m.

**GLASGOW (City)** meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW (Kelvingrove)** meets alternate Mondays, 13th and 27th June, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. MacDougall, 42 Stoneyhurst Street, Possil Park, Glasgow, N.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** Enquiries to A. D. Oliver, 13, Penywern Road, Earls Court, S.W.3. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday, from 1st June at 1, Broadhurst Gardens (nr. John Barnes).

**HIGH WYCOMBE** Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., discussion after branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after branch business. Secretary: 54, Ashdale House, Seven Sisters Road, N.4.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MQL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 39a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, D. Russell, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 14th and 28th June, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. C. May, 1 Hanover Road, N.W.10.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**ST. PANCRAS** meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o Head Office.

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# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 611 Vol. 51

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**NATIONALISATION—  
THE LABOUR PARTY'S  
MILLSTONE**

**THE FILMS**

**PEACEFUL USES OF  
ATOMIC POWER**

**NOTES BY THE WAY**

**MAKING STRIKES ILLEGAL**

**FIVE MINUTES  
OF SOCIALISM**

**ENGLISH SOCIAL  
DEMOCRATIC PARTIES**

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## Liberation and Loot in Austria

AUSTRIA has had another liberation—the fifth in this generation, i.e. since the Austro-Hungarian Empire (which in its time and turn had itself played the role of “liberator” of other nations) became the simple Republic Austria. That was in 1918 when it was liberated from the Hapsburg Dynasty. In 1934 the country was liberated from the “Reds,” in 1938 from the Dollfus-Schuschnigg dictatorship, in 1945 from Hitler-Germany’s “national Socialism” and in 1955 we record the liberation from the Four-Power occupation. Although every one of these previous “revolutions” had at the time been declared by the respective engineers and managers and their Press as decisive and final (at least for a thousand years), who would have the temerity in the face of the almost general acclamation to assert that the present (1955) liberation was not a more outstanding event than the others? Does it not only bring final “freedom, independence, sovereignty, peace and social justice” to Austria, but also augur well as an example of good will and pacification returning to a greatly troubled world in general? In hundreds of articles and broadcasts this was impressed upon the people. The Vienna Press this time was unanimous. Nationalistic Press hysteria celebrated veritable orgies. After more than 260 futile conferences in these last 10 years, and another 9-day conclave behind locked doors this month of May, the foreign Ambassadors finally arrived at an agreement to be submitted to and signed by the proxies of the Four Big Concerns concerned, plus Austria. At long last, freedom and independence had been secured.

The ceremonies which included of course receptions and banquets took place in the Palace of Belvedere and the Castle of Schönbrunn (which latter had seen within its walls such other one time liberators as Napoleon, and subsequently housed the famous Vienna Congress in 1815). Workers had to work overtime to give an extra shine to the historic places for the occasion. The delegates were feted and profusely photographed—their pictures must have gone round the whole world. Crowds called for the repeated appearance of the ministers on the balcony, just as they had done at the Hotel Imperial in 1938 after the entry of yet another liberator in Vienna. All the church bells rang out; a special thanksgiving service was celebrated in St. Stephen’s Cathedral by H.E. Cardinal Innitzer himself, who, like the late great “Socialist” statesman Dr. Renner, had in 1938 voted for Hitler and the Anschluss. If the Holy Trinity of Press, Radio and Pulpit, were unanimous in jubilation, it cannot be said that the people as a whole justified the exuberant enthusiasm with which they were credited by the publicity directors. Not only cynics, jesters and sceptics, but earnest and thoughtful folk generally, many doubtless pondering over the distressing and uncertain fate of their husbands, sons and



brothers still behind the iron curtain, did not seem to be able to forget their cares and worries or get themselves to believe in the bright future that was said to be ahead.

Was it that after all these boasted achievements of freedom and independence the mass of the people discovered that, as a witty Frenchman said: "The more it changes, the more it is the same thing"; was it that people's thoughts turned to the Monday morning when those who were dependent on an employer or, worse still, dependent on the dole or public assistance, would start the "new era" of freedom and independence not in



abundance and security, but in the same penury as yesterday? Or was it that when Austria's minister showed from the balcony of the castle the signed document to a waiting crowd, another historic episode sprang to people's minds—the picture of Mr. Chamberlain (back from a conference with Hitler—flourishing the "Peace in our Time" document from another balcony a twelvemonth only before the outbreak of World-war II? Or was it the knowledge that the liberators did not give freedom and independence as a free gift, but exacted a high price for it and imposed a heavy burden to meet? Was it that the people could already hear the well-known call for increased production, and sacrifices to be brought for the blessing of freedom and sovereignty? Was it the constant consciousness of all these wretched, harassing and depressing things that did not allow the people as a whole to justify the universal enthusiasm alleged to stir one and all?

The fact is that, though there certainly is general and well justified relief here at the prospective departure of not only the Muscovite, but of all the other occupation elements from Austria, the working-class have become more or less tired of promises and sceptical of

Treaties and Pacts made by statesmen and politicians on behalf of their masters. Socialists hope that the truth we keep hammering in, namely that all the freedoms in capitalism put together still leave the mass of mankind shackled and unfree, will soon be realized in wider circles and that the workers will at last strive for the ONE FREEDOM which is not a farce: the emancipation of the working-class of the world from the thralldom of the exploiters of labour.

Now what credentials had and have all these liberators, past and present, for their actions? What cause have they served? Have they served the all-important cause of ridding the world from poverty, insecurity, class-conflict and war? What problem have the 45 wars and "revolutions" in the last 100 years solved for the mass of the people—the working-class? Have the unspeakable tragedies, the untold ruins and rivers of blood and tears been justified that accompanied "liberations" down to this day? Has the fundamental status of the world's wealth-producers as mere objects of exploitation been altered or even advanced one iota towards one of free men? Is it no longer a condition of the workers' very existence that they have a job in some profit-making enterprise? Have they even secured the miserable enough right to work? Ask the young who left school, or those whom Capitalism calls old, too old at 45 or even at 35, and they will tell you heartrending tales of woe of their difficulties in securing that indispensable thing: a job with some employer, i.e. with some exploiter! "Collier's Magazine" (7.1.1955) brought a revealing picture of a queue of "old people" lined up at a Chicago Labour-Exchange with an article headed: "Shocking as it is, people in the prime of life are denied jobs because of their age." And what was the solution offered by secretary Mitchell of the Department of Labour in this "freedom and independence" enjoying U.S.A.? "Find places for old workers and MAKE PROFITS from their production, or be taxed much more heavily than now in order to sustain them as non-workers." (As if you helped a man by sustaining him in idleness and casting him out of society.) No sentimentalities here about human dignity. "The only solution," says Mitchell bluntly, "is to HIRE the older worker and MAKE A PROFIT from his production." Just about the same time a debate is raging in a Vienna Trade-Union paper (*Solidarität*) on the very same subject of the "too old for a job." Among a number of letters reproduced in the paper was a mournful but otherwise courageous epistle from a woman saying, among other things:

"Science endeavours to prolong man's life. What for? You are hardly 40 years of age—willing to work, with sense of duty and with much experience in life, but practically cast out of human society."

We are often told that we must wait for Socialism because of the lack of understanding and of human dignity of the millions of workers in the "backward" countries. Well, since Capitalist spokesmen in advanced and cultured countries can insult the workers by, for instance, distinguishing between them and "intellectuals," and telling them to their face with brutal bluntness that they are nothing but HIRED objects to make profit from, and since these spokesmen can get away with it with impunity, we ask, where is the difference between the cultured and the uncultured slaves, as far as enlightenment on their social position and a sense of human dignity is concerned? With all your greater experience and oppor-

tunities, you have not yet learned that it is the damnable system of Capitalist exploitation that is the cause of your and their misery and degradation! Indeed, in Russia and in China the need of repressive measures and an all-penetrating secret police, the terror the purges and forced labour camps (not to speak of the massacres) by which the Bolsheviks established and maintain their regime of State-Capitalism, would show that there was and is as much opposition in these backward countries as in the Western World. Neither the frequent frank and outspoken confessions in avowed Capitalist publications of the shocking features of modern society, nor the evident humbug and hypocrisy, the lying, deceit and cant of "Socialist" and "Communist"-leaders seem to stir you to intelligent action in opposition to the horrible system they all serve and want to perpetuate.

But to revert to our latest "world sensation." In order to illustrate by concrete example the difference between facts and fiction (which differences are often blurred these times), here is what one of the actors in this sensation, the Soviet Union, pretends to stand for, as stated in the organs of the Russian occupation forces and the Communist party in Austria:

"All that oppressed humanity has ever dreamt, all that the founders of scientific socialism had predicted in their works, has here (on one-sixth of the earth) been realized. A new era in the history of mankind began in 1917."

Now many of the Baltic and Balkan countries, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany, half of Berlin and part of Austria, have had the "new era," the Soviet dream of humanity brought to them.

Speaking for Austria, most people here will, when the "new era" apostles are gone, think of their experience with the latter as a nightmare rather than as a dream of paradise. And this even though this country has not seen the Bolshevik's blessings on the same scale as their own people and others have. Some people even speak of a Soviet "weak spot" for Austria and point to the "sudden" (after ten years!) decision to let the Austrian government take a turn in establishing their own "new era."

No more convincing proof of the Russian liberators' disinterestedness and generosity could be given than this "sensational" State-Treaty. After having for ten years had the onerous job of controlling and collecting the profits from no fewer than 454 large and small Concerns (including the Danube Steamship Co.) with some 63,000 workers, the Russian liberators will hand them back to Austria on payment of a paltry 150 million dollars, plus delivery of one million tons of crude oil annually for ten years, plus the right to seek for oil in various parts of Austria during eight years and in the event of the discovery of new sources to exploit them for 25 years, and plus other trifles. Then there is the renunciation of the further use of the prisoner-of-war labour-force. Considering the loss of profits which this entails for the Soviet government, they insist that Austria should make compensation by at least paying henceforth for the prisoners' keep and eventual return home. Further proof of Soviet "chivalry" is also provided by their readiness to readmit into the paradise the 30,000 to 40,000 people who had for incomprehensible reasons forsaken the land where the age-long dream of humanity had been realized. (For equally incomprehensible reasons these refugees have declined the noble offer).

Why then, you may ask, were the negotiations con-

ducted behind locked doors, and why this delay in releasing the full text of the Treaty? Could it be that, after all, the delegates had misgivings or pricks of conscience? Were they afraid that if all the articles were published unvarnished, people might discover discrepancies and disparity between professions and reality before the Press had done their preliminary doctoring and explaining away? (The *Arbeiter Zeitung* for example did their share of sugaring the pill by assuring the public that though the ransom Austria has to pay was no small amount, it was by no means too high a price for the full economic independence. . . .) Could it be that the delegates were ashamed of finding themselves in the same position as all their forerunners—the negotiators of treaties after all the 45 odd wars of liberation in the last 100 years, of which the world now knows that it never was a question of liberation or lofty ideals, but of grab and loot? Had the hitherto fact of the grab of the gold-mines in S. Africa by the British Capitalists, or the Treaty of Versailles (or any other of the dozens of liberation cum grab-crusades) been present in the delegates' minds? Did they perhaps become aware—as they studied the instructions received from their masters for the negotiations—of the manifest analogy of their position with that of thieves (having fallen out over the division of the loot) trying to come to at least a partial and temporary understanding after a ten year quarrel between themselves? Anyway, since another party of burglars, the German Capitalists, are now bitterly protesting against the confiscation of all their loot from the war, and with the thieves' quarrels continuing unabated elsewhere, anything beyond registering with relief the withdrawal of occupation forces from this theatre of operations—Austria—would be misplaced and unwarranted. For, getting rid of foreign occupation Powers does not mean getting rid of oppression as the people also of many other lands in Europe in Asia and Africa must have learned to their bitter disappointment. So far liberations and revolutions have always meant the exchange of one bunch of exploiters for another, while native rulers of backward countries have often proved worse tyrants even than the foreign exploiters and oppressors they ousted.

The fact is that rulers and leaders all stand for the appropriation and accumulation of wealth by a world privileged class, wealth that is produced by and filched from the mass of the people through the modern wages-system. Asiatic and African leaders have not studied for nothing at the European and American universities.

If war is loot for all to see, it is not so clear and evident in peace-time, though loot is the pivot of the whole mechanism of Capitalism in war and peace. In peace, the robbery taking place, as it does, in the complex process of production, is obscured by the wages-system. Glaring proof of this legalized robbery is, however, the fact that a 100 years of marvellous technical achievements and tremendous increase of wealth produced by the working-class, have left them in a condition of poverty and insecurity. Once the worker comes to understand this crucial fact and recognizes it as the cause of his predicament, he will realize that all these fine words about "liberation, freedom and independence, peace and social justice" are but so many bourgeois slogans and illusions to hide the brutal facts of their thieving system. Already in the French Revolution which put the Bourgeoisie into power, it was "liberté, égalité, fraternité" which gulled the destitute masses into fighting the feudal enemies of



their enemies, the rising Capitalist class, with the result that down to this day the above mentioned fine words mock the poverty-stricken French workers from every public building. It is certainly remarkable that it should still be possible for politicians to dispense and find listeners to these old outworn hollow phrases.

Enough has been said on the preposterous Nazi— and Bolshevik claim of having inaugurated a new social order, a “people’s democracy”—this swindle is now too obvious and well known. But how little “freedom, independence and democracy” etc., mean to the working-class under Capitalism even in the “free world” countries: the U.S., Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, is shown by the fact that the status of the workers there is likewise that of property-less wage-slaves, dependent for their very means of existence, on the precarious chance of securing a job with some employer. Such a status does not and cannot make for the enjoyment of life. Work under such circumstances can never be identified, as it ought to and will be under Socialism, with real satisfaction and pleasure; it is only done to keep the wolf from the door. And wherever people have to work for wages, to make profit for an employer, any accident, illness, or other physical or mental disability—not to mention the factor of age—becomes something akin to a family catastrophe. The employers, even of the Welfare State, will quickly make you understand that they are not a welfare institution, but mean to make the Concern for which they have hired you, pay—the shareholders want their loot all the time.

Unfortunately, in so far as workers have not become

altogether apathetic towards politics, they are, despite all disillusion, failures and frustrations still putting their trust in leaders and falling for the day to day affairs that invariably are only concerns of their enemies: the Capitalist class. It is a commentary on the policy and activity of the so-called “Socialist Party of Austria,” the “Communist” party and their fellow travellers everywhere that so far from getting the workers interested in, and educated to Socialism, they are busy assisting the Capitalistic state in building up still more devastating armaments. Not to be left behind by their big brother in England, who is all for the production of A-H-bombs, the Austrian Socialist Party and Communist Party, are now debating the form of the new army with at least “conventional weapons.” No doubt, the S.P., having a quarter of a century ago organized the Schutzbund with a view to opposing by force of arms the power of the state, and thus invited the disaster and terrible fate it met in 1934, have learned a lesson. It is, however, not a lesson Socialists teach, but a lesson for leaders how to keep their jobs. The red colour of the banners carried by the ill-fated Schutzbund, with the inscriptions Freiheit, Gleichheit, Brüderlichkeit, Freundschaft, etc., will be replaced by different dyes and inscriptions. It will be the red-white-red variety and perhaps the Double-Eagle. Sure, it will warm the cockles of the hearts of many an old Austrian soldier and general, though other people will contemplate the spectacle of trooping the colour, philosophically saying to themselves: Well, the more it changes, the more it is the same thing.

R.

## THE FILMS

FROM time to time Hollywood gives us a film which is worthy of our attention. In this category we may place *On The Waterfront*, *The Barefoot Contessa*, and more recently *Marty*. All these films present not only a high standard of technical skill and acting ability, but also, and this is what makes them particularly interesting, an unusually accurate reflection upon some parts of contemporary life.

This is perhaps most obvious in Elia Kazan’s *On*



*The Waterfront*. It is the story of the docker who is gradually awakened to the reality of the life around him; of his increasing antagonism, his rebellious stirrings, and his final successful combat with the crooked union bosses. This is a film to see not only because of the skill which has gone into its making, but also because it rings true.

*The Barefoot Contessa* is as subtle as *On The Waterfront* is obvious. Here is a biting satirical essay upon wealth and power. There are lines in the film which one

feels had they appeared in a film of five years ago, would have resulted in the writer making a sprightly appearance before the Un-American Activities Committee.

Of the three, however, *Marty* is undoubtedly the pick. Here is a film which is pure joy. No great Hollywood epic this, but the simple tale of the search of a very ordinary American, a butcher by profession, for a spouse. The whole thing reads as true to life as the usual product is false. No de-luxe kitchens, no stupendous cars and fashionable clothes, no slinky blonde who makes the rest of her sex pale into masculine insignificance, this is reality; and because it is real it pulls at the heart strings and tugs at the emotions with devastating effect. There can be few people who could possibly sit through this film without recognising their own experiences as they flash before them on the screen.

This is a film about real people living in a real world. Here are depicted social problems of this day and age, problems of loneliness, of old age, of inadequate housing, of artificial social values; they are all paraded before us. The film has no answer to these problems, even though hero and heroine are reunited at the end of the final reel, but at least it has the courage to pose them. We can but hope that this trend in realism, which has already been felt—particularly in the Italian and Mexican film, will be continued, and that the cinema public will not only become aware of life’s problems but also realise their solution.

MICHAEL D. GILL.

## EALING BRANCH MAY SALES DRIVE



EALING branch’s sales drive of the SOCIALIST STANDARD during May was very successful; a total of 636 copies were sold, of which 283 were to new subscribers reached by the door-to-door canvass. The attendance of canvassers was always good—a number of members tried their hand for the first time and found the work a most agreeable appetiser for their Sunday roast beef and Yorkshire. New areas were canvassed in Brentford, Hounslow, White City, Eastcote (worked by one member on his own) and East Acton. 170 copies were sold to people who have been taking the STANDARD on the door long enough to count as “regular readers.”

Canvassing is not all hard work; or rather, it is work with a spice to it. Half-a-dozen comrades working on a street is an exhilarating sight; going from door to door, chinking the money, noting addresses for a call next month. And there are good times afterwards, in the café or the “pub” with long talks and the atmosphere of comradeship thick like smoke in the air.

There are moments of humour too. Some time ago

the STANDARD appeared with an article about football on the front page. One Ealing member, canvassing this issue, was confronted by a young woman. “I’ll ask Dad if he wants it,” she said, turning to call, “Dad! Do you want a book about football?” “No, I don’t!” came Dad’s reply, “You know I’m only interested in politics!”

Two members were covering a block of flats on a main road one windy morning in May and they agreed to split up and meet outside when each had finished his stint. The one who finished last, on coming out into the street, was surprised to see his companion darting and stooping this way and that in the middle of the road, avoiding the traffic with a palpitating turn of speed and agility. First reactions were that he had cracked under the strain (he is the branch literature secretary) and had taken leave of his sanity. But before the ambulance could be called he returned, breathless and oily, clutching a grubby scrap of paper on which he noted his sales for the morning. A passing wind, he explained, had whipped it from his hand into the road and it was valuable enough to take a few risks to recover!

All the effort in canvassing sifts itself down, over the years, into a hard core of regular readers. The Ealing member who has been taking the STANDARD to some of our older subscribers is almost a member of their families—they invite him in for coffee, he takes them presents of sweets, has even visited them in hospital. They are good friends of the party, who really read our literature and, as one woman said, “... sit round the fire of an evening talking about the STANDARD.” An average of hours of work went into reaching each of these people. But they are overwhelmingly worth every second of it.

IVAN.

## FIVE MINUTES ON SOCIALISM—II

IN our last talk in the April issue we discussed, briefly, the economic and philosophic basis of Socialism and also the erroneous statement that Socialism exists in Russia, China and other countries applying totalitarian techniques.

China’s industrial background is one of foreign exploitation by British, French, Japanese and others. This resulted in a two-fold opposition—from the workers and from the educated propertied class who were envious of the foreign exploiters.

The Communists fermenting this situation, expounded the role of patriotism and National Independence as being a working class issue. The result of this teaching (which still continues) can be seen in the recent struggle for internal power among the leaders resulting in the purging of some few weeks ago. If Russia’s experience is any example, the spate should increase. The final results may well provide a future struggle between China and Russia. In the long run the situation will become clearer as the Chinese workers realise that they suffer as much exploitation from their own ruling class as they did from the “foreign devil.” Socialists here again differ from all other parties when they say that the quarrels between

various Capitalist groups are of no concern of the workers of their respective countries.

It is held by some that Socialism means “share with your neighbour” and knowing his neighbour, very often the worker is not so keen. “Anyway,” says the worker, “religion teaches this if I want to apply it.” Socialism does not say this. Socialism means the Social ownership of the means of wealth. It is claimed that we owe the production of wealth to outstanding men of ability and that the creation of a “common denominator” of living will result in a lack of initiative. Such people should enquire into how Capitalism has rewarded its inventors, etc. Hargreaves, inventor of the “Spinning Jenny,” suffered from dishonest manufacturers and died in want. John Kay, inventor of the “Flying Shuttle,” starved to death. And one could go on in this fashion.

Socialism is now possible but under Capitalism ownership remains the prerogative of a minority class. When production and inventiveness are no longer shackled to the profit system but serve the advancement of all, then, and only then, will initiative be given real encouragement.

W. BRAIN.



## NOTES BY THE WAY

### Making Strikes Illegal

The increase in the number and extent of strikes has started discussion in Government circles of possible new trade union legislation. The *Economist* (18 June) warns of difficulties and has an interesting comment on the part played by strikes in Capitalism.

"One idea that needs to be consigned firmly to the scrapheap from the start is the proposal that strikes as a whole should be declared illegal, and that all trade unions should be constrained by law to accept impartial arbitration upon their disputes. This proposal is unfair, undesirable and impracticable. It is unfair because the threat of a strike is a trade union's last weapon for securing an increase in wages to which it feels that its members are entitled; and, in an imperfect world, arbitration in a country where strikes were theoretically debarred would always be less favourable to the workers than arbitration in a country where strikes are still legal. The proposal is undesirable because the pressure towards higher wages exerted by trade unions is a dynamic as well as an inflationary force in any economy; it helps to draw resources into the trades that are most profitable, and it forces employers into the most labour-saving, and therefore the most forward-looking, forms of production. Last, but not least, the proposal is impracticable because the trade unions simply would not wear it, and would always find ways to flout any such dictatorial decree; if 70,000 engine drivers decided that they all felt too ill to work on a certain day, no government could put all the 70,000 in prison."

### The Election Results

Naturally political commentators have been busy since the election trying to interpret the heavy fall of votes that reduced the Labour Party M.P.s to 277 in an enlarged House of Commons of 630 members. (At the 1951 election Labour won 295 in a House of 625).

The *Economist's* analysis (4/6/55) produced the following summary:—

"It was not the swung, but the stay-at-homes, who decided the election. The total poll was 76.8 per cent., compared with 82.6 per cent. in 1951. Within those totals (1) Labour polled 12.4 million votes compared with 13.9 million in 1951. One-and-a-half million people—or more than one out of every ten of those who voted Labour last time—did not this time feel excited enough to turn out. (2) The Conservatives polled 13.3 million votes compared with 13.7 million in 1951. As they piled up some 165,000 votes in four Ulster constituencies where they were unopposed last time, it seems that over half a million people who voted Tory last time did not vote this time (3) The Liberals polled 722,000 votes, about 8,000 less than in 1951. In the constituencies with unchanged boundaries in which they fought in both 1951 and 1955, however, their votes went up by an average of about 450 per constituency. More than the whole of their increase in the share of the votes in these constituencies was at the expense of Labour."

The Labour vote was 46.4 per cent. of the total vote compared with the Tories' 49.7 per cent., and the 3.9 per cent. that went to Liberals and others. In 1951 Labour got 48.8 per cent. and the Tories 48 per cent.

The Communist Party ran 17 candidates and lost 15 deposits through getting less than one-eighth of the votes—total cost of lost deposits £2,250. But comparing their votes at this election with the vote obtained in the same constituencies in 1951 (or in 1950 if no candidate stood in 1951) it would seem that on balance the Communists

somewhat improved their position. The total vote of their 17 candidates was 33,144. In 1951 their ten candidates obtained 21,640.

Of the Bevanites the *Economist* says:—

"It is not necessarily true to say that Bevanite sitting members did badly in this election. Mr. and Mrs. Bevan, the Coventry duet, and Mrs. Barbara Castle, did do rather badly; but they were in the sort of areas where the general trend was towards a low Labour turn-out. On the other hand Mr. Mikardo, Mr. Greenwood, Mr. Harold Wilson and Mr. Harold Davies all did rather well."

### Remarkable Admission by Mr. Attlee

In a speech to a Labour Women's Gala at Durham on 4 June Mr. Attlee spoke about the need for the Labour Party to carry on after their defeat in the General Election. Having mentioned the struggles "the blood, sweat and tears" of the present generation of Labour Party members and of their forerunners, he dealt with what remains to be done. And this is what he said:—

"We are nowhere near the kind of society we want. We have an infinitely long way to go." (*Manchester Guardian*, 6/6/55.)

Mr. Attlee meant by this that we are nowhere near Socialism.

Yet in 1949 in a speech at Walthamstow he said:—

"In these three and a half years you have had a new pattern set up in this country. The social reforms which we introduced have not been patchy; they have represented a new social order. . . . We have had a great experience in democratic Socialism." (*Manchester Guardian*, 22/1/49.)

In his Durham speech in June of this year Mr. Attlee claimed that the work of the Labour Party has endured despite their electoral defeat, because it has influenced the Tories:—

"They have had to accept what we have done: in fact they claim to have done the same things only they say they have done them better. They have had to accept many things which 20, 30 or 40 years ago they would have denounced as heresies, impossibilities and silly Socialism." (*S. Times*, 5/6/55.)

It is difficult to discover from Mr. Attlee's various statements what conception he now has of the way in which what he regards as Socialism is to be achieved.

If in 1955 it is an infinitely long way off, what has happened to the "new social order" of 1949?

And if the "new social order" of 1949 was not to be taken literally but was Mr. Attlee's fanciful way of describing some modest social reforms which the Tories also accept, how does Mr. Attlee think his Socialism ever will be achieved? For the Labour Party never envisaged the possibility of the Tories beating them at their own game of catching workers' votes with reforms. They never thought to see the day when a majority of the workers, having had Labour Government for six years, would prefer to see Capitalism run by Tories. Though, as it happens, this ought to have been no surprise at all to Mr. Attlee for in 1937 in his "Labour Party in Perspective" (p. 123) he wrote:—

"The plain fact is that a Socialist Party cannot hope to make a success of administering the capitalist system because it does not believe in it."

Mr. Attlee's dilemma is complete. For if he does not think the Labour Party in office can make a success of the job of administering Capitalism how can he hope to win elections by showing that it is a success?

The Labour Party used to dismiss the S.P.G.B. case

for concentrating on winning straight support for Socialism, with the argument that the workers did not want Socialism "an infinitely long way" off, but wanted a Labour Government to give them practical benefits now by removing the worst causes of discontent.

But now we have Mr. Emanuel Shinwell, Minister of Defence in the Labour Government, telling the Staffordshire miners that the reason Labour lost the election was that "most people were satisfied with things as they are. But they were dissatisfied with the disgraceful brawling in the Labour Party and by what seemed to be a scramble for power." (*Reynolds News*, 12/6/55).

So the workers, after 50 years of Labour propaganda, do not want a Labour Government to give them practical benefits now but want a Tory Government to do the job.

Where does Mr. Attlee go from here?

### Is it Foolish?

The following appeared in the *Stratford Express* (3 June, 1955):—

#### "HOW FOOLISH"

"It seems so simple to put a cross against the name of a chosen candidate—so simple that it is almost impossible to go wrong. Yet in these local divisions scores of people wasted their votes by spoiling papers in one of a variety of ways. In one of the West Ham divisions, for instance, there were 40 spoilt papers. Some people had added their name and address; some had scrawled the letters S.P.G.B. (Socialist Party of Great Britain) on the paper, while others had voted for each of the candidates and a few had put the paper in the ballot box completely blank. An indication of their state of mind, perhaps!"



It is, of course, the reference to the S.P.G.B. that concerns us, and it has to be taken in conjunction with the statement that it is "so simple to put a cross against the name of a chosen candidate." But suppose you don't choose either candidate. Suppose you are one of the million and a half former Labour voters who could discern so little difference between the parties that it wasn't worth while voting.

Or, again, suppose you are a Socialist and do not want Capitalism at all, not Labour-administered Capitalism or Tory-administered Capitalism? What should you do then? Is it foolish to show on the ballot paper what you do want? It has at any rate had the merit that it caught the attention of the *Stratford Express*.

Of course Socialists would prefer to have their own Socialist candidates to vote for, but the Labour, Tory and Liberal parties, by agreement on the £150 deposit,

made it very difficult for a small organisation to enter the field.

### Peaceful uses of Atomic Power

All the people who are clamouring for "wars without H-Bombs" instead of working for a social system that won't engender war, think they are being ever so humane and practical when they plead that atomic energy should be put to "peaceful uses for the good of mankind."

What they really show is that they haven't learned the first thing about the cause of war.

Alongside the clamour about bombs, but attracting less attention, powerful groups of firms in all the leading countries are preparing for the struggle to gain the market for atomic equipment. One group of seven British engineering and electrical companies has formed the Nuclear Power Plant Co., which, according to the *Evening Standard* (19/5/55), has a capital of £1,000,000, but has behind it the £75 million of the sponsoring companies.

An Atomic Trade Fair is to be held in Geneva in August. A *Financial Times* correspondent reports:

"The exhibition is to be attended by representatives from 84 countries and companies from the U.S., France, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, Holland and Norway will be exhibiting their designs for atomic power plants and for nuclear energy equipment of all sorts in an effort to gain future business in competition with the U.K. from countries less experienced in atomic power development."

"Russia will be exhibiting atomic energy designs and equipment of many types, and her exhibit may rival those of Britain, the U.S. and France—the largest exhibitors." (*Financial Times*, 8/6/55.)

A *Financial Times* editorial (11/6/55) stressed the importance of these early stages "for competition will grow increasingly fierce and what is done now will determine the success of Britain in the future."

The simple fact is that Capitalism's fierce conflicts for markets and raw materials, are not and cannot be "peaceful," whether the commodity on sale is atomic plant, coal, petrol, steel, textiles, or anything else. Here is the breeding ground of war.

This is very unpleasant reading for well-meaning Pacifists, but these are the facts of Capitalist life.

The rivalry in obtaining sources of uranium and other materials for atomic power, and in capturing markets for atomic equipment, will be just as fruitful of international conflict as were past struggles to acquire iron ore, petrol, coal, etc., and markets in which to sell the products.

### The Millionaires' Welfare State

According to the *Daily Express* City Editor (25/5/55) Mr. Harold Samuel has done very well for himself under the "Welfare State."

"They tell you that it is impossible to make a million in these days of super-high taxation. Well, young man, do not be daunted in your endeavours by such talk."

"For here is West End property man Harold Samuel to prove that it can be done. And proving it three times over."

"For under a share plan which comes this morning from Land Securities Investment Trust—key company in Mr. Samuel's property network—he lets drop that his personal stake is 692,000 Ordinary shares."

"And in markets each of those 10s. shares command a price just 1s. short of a fiver at 99s. In all £3,426,000."

"Lush indeed has been the money-making of anyone who backed the Samuel's star when he took over Land Securities eleven years ago."

"Then its shares were priced at 8s. a go in markets. Allowing for free issues each of those shares would now

(Continued on page 105)



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JULY,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## NATIONALISATION—THE LABOUR PARTY'S MILLSTONE

IN the minds of supporters and opponents alike the Labour Party has always been associated with Nationalisation and up to 1945, it was a popular item in that party's programme. It had the attractions of novelty and to "progressives," including some in the Liberal and Tory parties, it promised to be a happy blend of warm idealism with practical realism. For the candidate at elections it was the way to win friends and influence voters. Now, saddening experience has taken off the bloom. Fewer than half the electors can be induced to vote for the party that sponsored it and those who really love it are fewer still. This does not worry the S.P.G.B., for we never had any illusion about it and never supported it; but for the Labour Party it is a disaster. In the fifty years since our formation in 1904, while we were warning the workers not to waste their time on nationalisation, because at most it could solve only Capitalist problems, the Labour Party were popularising it, campaigning for it, and resting their hopes for continued electoral victory on nationalisation proving a success.

We, too, were partly wrong. We were right in saying that nationalisation would solve no working class problem but we are now faced with the situation that British Capitalists decided, at least for the present, that nationalisation is of little use to them either.

It is not difficult to explain this. In the long boom years since the war it has been easy to sell and easy to make profits, and it is only the Capitalist whose wealth

is invested in declining or depressed industries who looks hopefully on being bought out by the Government. Another reason, one that influences manufacturers and traders as a whole, is that the nationalised industries, notably coal and transport, have not given the anticipated low charges high efficiency and freedom from strikes. They may be wrong about this. It may be that the same industries left in private hands would have served the great body of Capitalists even worse; but be that as it may many of them have reached the conclusion that the experiment has failed them.

The attitude of the Labour Party leaders in this, to them, alarming situation has been confused and disingenuous. Some have thought it best to stick to the old propaganda because that is what their supporters are used to, while others have thought it expedient to try to find new ways of winning votes. So in the recent election the Conservatives found themselves fighting a divided and dispirited Labour army—those at the back pushed for more nationalisation while those at the front tried to keep their one-time favourite child out of sight.

Indeed, some of them are now pretending that the Labour Party never really did attach more than minor importance to nationalisation, though the evidence of their former declarations proves this to be an absurd distortion of the facts.

In 1929, for example, the late Arthur Henderson, who was a Minister in the two Labour Governments of 1923-4 and 1929-31, and became Leader of the Party in 1931, made a forthright declaration that nationalisation was the fundamental issue dividing the Labour Party from its opponents. This was in the Foreword to a pamphlet, "The Success of Nationalisation," written by Thomas Johnston, another prominent member of the Labour Party. This is what Mr. Henderson had to say:—

"This pamphlet deals with a fundamental issue of modern politics. Nationalisation is a much abused word, and its meaning is often misunderstood and misrepresented. But as a matter of principle and policy it represents the dividing line between the Labour Party and the orthodox parties whose historical supremacy it has so successfully challenged."

and again, after identifying nationalisation with Socialism, Mr. Henderson wrote:—

"More clearly than ever as the political parties develop their respective economic policies, it can be seen that Nationalisation is the dividing issue between them." (Italics his.)

The claims the Labour Party made for nationalisation in those days were varied: some to appeal to the Capitalist, some to appeal to the workers.

In "The Modern Case for Socialism," published in 1928, Mr. A. W. Humphrey, a member of the Labour Party, quoted with approval the argument used by Chiozza Money (a Liberal who later supported the Labour Party) that nationalisation of the railways would provide cheap transport for manufacturers. Money had quoted the charges made by the privately run British railways by contrast with those on the German State railways: "The charge for carrying hardware from Birmingham to Newcastle (207 miles) was 15/- per ton, but from Dortmund to Rotterdam (153 miles) was 10/- per ton" (p. 195).

A second line of sales-talk for nationalisation was that it would improve the relations between employers and employed; which has an odd flavour now when strikes in the nationalised coal mines and on the railways are the order of the day.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, twice Prime Minister in

Labour Governments, developed this theme in his "Socialism: Critical and Constructive" (first published in 1921, re-issued in 1924 and 1929). He not only promised that this better relationship would develop but quoted an example that had, he said, come to his notice in some country (unnamed) where an industry had been nationalised.

"They would never dream of going back to the old bad relationship. The managers themselves were happier in their work and found far more heartiness in it. The men had abandoned of their own free will the most provocative restrictions which they had enforced—or tried to enforce—as a protection against Capitalism, and which undoubtedly hampered production." (1929 edition, p. 169.)

That was the hope. We have recently seen the reality in the railway strike. Mr. Baty, general secretary of the strikers' union the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, made the following statement to the *Sunday Express* (5 June, 1955):—

"I agree one was entitled to expect an improvement in labour relations under the new set-up. But, in fact, they have deteriorated very considerably."

One of the arguments of MacDonald and other Labour leaders was that under nationalisation the old concern of the Railway Directors with the financial aspect would disappear. Mr. Baty, on the contrary, says of the nationalised railways:—"The men at the top . . . are always looking round to see how they can avoid this or that item of spending."

One ironical incident of the railway strike was the resolution passed by 1,000 strikers at Willesden demanding the dismissal of the members of the British Transport Commission (*Daily Worker*, 13/6/55). This Commission includes former officials of the locomotive union and the N.U.R.!

Still another illusion of the Labour Party was that nationalisation would reap big profits and enable these to be used, at least in part, for the benefit of the workers. The late Philip Snowden, another leader of the Labour Party, put this in his "If Labour Rules" (1923, page 27)

"Nationalisation would place at the disposal of the

## NOTES BY THE WAY—continued from page 102

command a dizzy £66 apiece.

"For the Samuel policy has been to build the group up big in property at a time when property values were rising even faster than his shares."

"A policy which pays off handsomely—for Mr. Samuel."

Note the dates. The foundations of the "Welfare State" were being laid in 1944 when various schemes were prepared under the Coalition Government and put into operation after the Labour victory in 1945. And it is in this period that Mr. Samuel has built up his three and a half millions. And what predominantly helped to push up property values was the Labour Government's inflationary policy, faithfully continued by the Tories.

The Welfare State ought to have at least one very enthusiastic backer.

There are many others, too.

The rise in property values that helped Mr. Samuel has been paralleled by the rise in share values on the Stock Exchange and for the same general reason. And Mr. Gaitskill, in the House of Commons on 16 June, 1955, estimated that holders of ordinary shares have gained £5,000 million through the share rise of the past 15 months.

And all the time, including the years of Labour Government, small savers who put money into the Savings

State the means of raising the standard of life of large numbers of workers."

This may be judged by the recent complaint of the railway unions that their members wages have fallen behind the levels of private industries.

It was the belief of the Labour Party before it came to power that as industries were nationalised the benefits falling to grateful workers and grateful users would generate enthusiasm for more nationalisation and win ever increasing support for the Party responsible.

They can no longer believe in this and the election delivered a blow to their hopes in the Cleveland division where live many workers employed by Imperial Chemical Industries. During the campaign the threat was made that a future Labour Government would nationalise that firm, or part of it; which I.C.I. countered with a scheme of profit-sharing. A correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (18/5/55) reported that the Conservatives made this a prominent issue and that "trade unionists within the industry have reported that the men are threatening not to vote at all in the election."

After the election the *Economist* (4/6/55) commented:—

"A final striking result was the cut in Mr. Palmer's majority in the unchanged Labour seat of Cleveland, from 5,481 to 181; the workers in this constituency are largely employed by Imperial Chemical Industries, which Labour has promised to nationalise."

The election has been followed by the Conservative Prime Minister's announcement that his Government intends to encourage companies to introduce schemes of profit-sharing and co-partnership. The Tories now think that they can win votes by promising such schemes in place of nationalisation.

It only needs to add that the Socialist Party will criticise profit-sharing as it has always criticised nationalisation, and for the same reason; that Socialism is what the workers interest requires not the perpetuation of Capitalism whether as private Capitalism or as State Capitalism.

Bank or Savings Certificates were having the real value of their savings whittled away by the same price rise.

This must be what the Labour Party means by a more equal distribution of wealth and what the Tories mean by a property-owning democracy.

## Calling up Striking Seamen

The *Daily Mirror* (17/6/55) published the following:—

"One hundred seamen involved in the unofficial strike of Cunard liner crews received preliminary notices of call-up at Liverpool yesterday."

"They are men aged between eighteen and twenty-six, whose call-up was deferred when they joined the Merchant Navy."

"Now they are unofficially unemployed and liable to be called-up. The notices they received by post yesterday asked them to say which service they preferred."

"Many of them rushed to the Shipping Federation in Liverpool to ask what to do."

"Strike leaders said: 'They were told at the Federation that if they signed a form promising not to break any more contracts with the Maritime Board the call-up would be deferred again.'"

"This is a form of intimidation."

"Normally if men under twenty-six leave a ship several weeks elapse before they are assumed to have left the sea and to be liable for call-up."

We need hardly be surprised at the action by the



authorities but how do Liberals, who profess to be the protectors of individual rights against Tory reaction and Labour Regimentation, view the editorial in the *Liberal Star* (16/6/55) which urged the new Tory Government to take this step?

"Surely Parliament must take a hand without delay. After all, the Minister of Labour and National Service have power to serve the strikers with their call-up papers."

It is only fair to add that the *Liberal Manchester Guardian* protested at the Government's action.

#### Co-operative Strike Beating

The Co-operative movement long ago forgot its origins and is just another Capitalist trading organization. But it does not so regard itself. It claims to be a movement to help the workers and is in direct association with the Labour Party and T.U.C. The following heading and extract is from an article in *Cooperative News* (11/6/55). They show that the trading operations of the Co-operative movement, conducted according to normal Capitalist rules within the framework of Capitalism, create precisely the same outlook as is to be found in any other trading concern.

#### "BEAT-THE-STRIKE MEASURES ARE IN FULL SWING"

"By using their own transport and in some cases working late into the night, co-operative societies throughout the country are beating the rail strike. Coal supplies, which are the hardest hit, are being carried by societies' own lorries from the pitheads.

"At Derby Society, coal department employees worked throughout last week-end restocking the coal yards. With

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHINA

It is becoming more typical of the stultified mental attitude of "schools higher learning" that they refuse to allow the most innocuous controversial subjects to be discussed and debated. In the growing atmosphere of fear and thought control which is prevalent today, the prohibition of academic debates between Annapolis, West Point and other collegians on the subject of the recognition of China caused even a most conservative President of the United States to state in his weekly press conference that he himself would have allowed such debates. Though the subject of the debate is of prime importance to the ruling classes and is considered quite a knotty problem by them, what are some of the fundamental issues involved in the whole China question, and who has the answers?

What will it be—Recognition of China or War, hot or cold? Will it be "peaceful coexistence" or the culmination of modern science, mass slaughter by fusion? The problem of relationships of the United States with China as part of the world wide competition of nationalist states, is one aspect of the never ending struggles of capitalist powers. Drastic and swift as the changes in tactics may be, the current policy of U.S. Capitalism is that there will be no major war for a while, and that the economic competition will determine supremacy.

In line with the emphasis on economic development the Foreign Operations Administration is presenting estimates to the Bureau of the Budget. Military programmes will be cut down in Europe and economic programmes in Asia will be expanded. Economic aid to the countries surrounding China will be greater in 1955 than the \$1,200,000,000 expended in 1954. Note well that it is the

the society's own vehicles and tipper lorries borrowed from the building department, the society built up a sufficient stock to satisfy present demands."

Of course those responsible for this will indignantly retort that they could not do anything else in the circumstances. Too true. Those who think they can "beat the Capitalists at their own game" have no choice but to strive to preserve the great illusion they have created.

#### Educational Progress?

At the annual conference of the National Association of Head Teachers the President, Mr. Frank Barton had something to say about the educational system. After mentioning that the hopes roused by the Butler Education Act had still not been fully realised, he said:—

"Is this really surprising? Popular education has always had a parsimonious existence. It was conceived in poverty, born in penury, cradled in privation, and nurtured in frugality.

"Unfortunately the niggardly attitude which characterised its introduction still persists. In this respect some local administrators are as much to blame as the central Government. Taking into account the increased numbers of pupils and the inflationary value of the pound, we are spending less to-day on educating the children of this country than we spent before the war. This can hardly be called progress.

"Too many of our children are still being educated in overcrowded, under-heated, unhygienic, and badly lighted conditions. It is regrettable that one solution to the shortage of classrooms has been the utilisation of ugly nineteenth-century buildings with dark, dungeon-like passages." (*Manchester Guardian*, 30/5/55.)

H.

Government which is planning all this. State planners all, on either side!

#### Rapid Growth

China, it is feared, is developing faster economically than the "free countries" of Asia. Although there are no exact statistics on Chinese capital investment, ex-Premier Shigeru Yoshida of Japan estimated that the rate of capital investment in China was twice that of other Asian countries. The United States which poured billions of dollars into Nationalist China only to have it washed down the drain, still is trying to create, develop and control the market in Asia. With its tremendous economic strength the United States is attempting to contain the embryonic development of state capitalism in China. As a measure of the strength of the rivals, the gross national product, the total value of all production, in 1954 is expected to be between \$350,000,000,000 and \$360,000,000,000 for the United States, \$200,000,000,000 for Western Europe, \$160,000,000,000 for Russia and all her allies, and about \$75,000,000,000 for the other Asian countries. China's industrial development is, of course, now just beginning to accelerate.

What is transpiring in China is not Socialism, no more Socialism than there is in the U.S.S.R. Ruthless as were and are the methods of Russian State Capitalism, the child bids fair to outdo the parent. In the purges carried out since 1949 the total number executed is estimated at well over 10,000,000. Communist bureaucrats have replaced the larger land owners and the urban merchants who were mercilessly executed. Peiping, even after the purges, still officially claims a population of 582,000,000

in all of China. About 80 per cent. are peasants cultivating two acres of land or less. Josue de Castro in his "Geography of Hunger" well documents the chronic famines which periodically starved to death millions of Chinese, and the constant hunger which over two thirds of the population suffer. Land reform was eagerly received by millions of peasants even though they only received an acre or two at the expense of the wealthier landlords, who themselves might have had only five to 20 acres at the most. However, when Peiping undertakes to collectivize 100,000,000 peasant families within the next decade force indeed will be the midwife of collectivization, and the costs will be even higher than in Russia where millions died in the collectivization attempt.

#### Anti-Working Class

Communist apologists seem to glory in the death of millions as some sort of historical necessity. They, like the Nationalists who preceded them in power, take pride in their toughness and ruthlessness. A Socialist may ask whether this is the means by which will be made "the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom." Socialists think not. Socialists think that promoting the understanding of the meaning of Socialism in the majority of working class heads is of more importance in achieving Socialism than the bludgeoning of working class heads to achieve economic progress in backward countries.

The rapid industrialization of China will require large amounts of capital. Some of this capital will come from Russia. Certain countries of the West would also like to find a market in China for their capital goods. Whether under the direction of the entrepreneur, corporation or state, "capital is value that breeds surplus value." Of all the commodities involved the commodity labour-power is the only one which "creates during its consumption a greater value than it itself possesses." The Chinese State unhindered by any organized opposition of the

workers will attempt to secure this labour-power at a price lower than its value, low as its value is by Western standards. Even then, as elsewhere, the efficiency of the worker must be increased and he requires more of the means of life to replace the energy expended. The value of the labour power of the Chinese worker is determined like that of an American worker. It is determined by the labour-time socially necessary for its production and its reproduction. However, as Marx wrote, "in contrast to other commodities a historical and moral element enters into the determination of the value of labour power." Therefore, if there will be increases eventually in the standard of living under State Capitalism, they will be increases which are consonant both with the development and needs of capitalism, and also the results of the struggle to sell labour-power as a commodity to the state at its increased value.

The realization that its mode of production is far inferior to that of the West impels the Chinese State to tremendous effort in the economic sphere. It is part of the dialectic of world development that some day will bring Socialism. Socialism is far from being established in China. Though the pessimist may echo the same sentiment about the advanced capitalist countries of the West, they are at least one step nearer. China is merely following the industrialization pattern of countries like Japan and Russia.

While someday the Chinese will produce automobiles instead of rickshas, will produce all the various consumer and capital goods that the industrialized West produces, and the commissars of the "People's Democracy" will delude them with the propaganda that they have advanced into Socialism, the status of the Chinese workers will still be that of workers of the world over—wage slaves for a master class. Until this relationship is done away with there will be no Socialism.

W.

(From *Western Socialist*, Jan.-Feb. 1955).

## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

**Ealing Branch.** Ealing Branch's special May sales drive has been an overwhelming success. 53 dozen S.S. were sold altogether and the response of members was truly heartening. No doubt the target for the next campaign will have to be raised to 60 dozen. What is really required, however, is an even greater number of members to take up canvassing; with double the response from members, the sale of a 1,000 S.S. a month would be well within our powers.

The first of the Branch's propaganda trips to South-sea (on 5th June), was very successful. Two carloads of members made the journey. The weather, for once, was fine, and a useful outdoor meeting was held all the afternoon. A second trip is projected later in the season.

The experiment of running the Ealing Green meetings on Saturday afternoon instead of the evening has met with a reasonable degree of success so far. Members are asked to do their best to support the meetings, which promise well.

The Branch is doing very well in most spheres at the

moment. There is plenty of activity and interest, and attendance at Branch meetings is good and consistent. Some new members have been made or acquired and these have given useful support at a time when we are in urgent need of extra "manpower." Ex-members and sympathisers are asked to contact the Branch and help play their part in further expanding the influence and activity of the Party in the area.

**S.W. London Branch** wish to contact Comrade Carnell, who has moved from the district and as the Branch is unable to contact him as they are unaware of his new address. The Secretary of the Branch at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, would be pleased to have news of Comrade Carnell.

Members and sympathisers are reminded that a list of Party pamphlets is given in this issue and the Litera-



ture Committee will be pleased to forward copies on request. Prices of pamphlets and postage rates are mentioned in the list. A subscription form for the SOCIALIST STANDARD is also in this issue.

Although the weather has not been very helpful, it is hoped that when conditions permit, members will support outdoor propaganda meetings as often as possible. It makes the speaker's job easier if members are at hand

to help out with literature sales and to form a nucleus of an audience at meetings.

**Branch Directory** on back page of the STANDARD. There are several alterations this month regarding meeting days and change of secretaries addresses, so please refer to this in case your branch is one that has changed details.

P.H.

## ENGLISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

**N**EITHER Marx, who died in 1883, nor Engels, who died in 1895, were impressed by the early efforts made in England to advance the Socialist movement. Social Democratic Parties did not make their appearance until the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In the eighties the Social Democratic Federation, the Fabian Society, and the Socialist League, made their appearance, and in the nineties the Independent Labour Party. Of these parties the Socialist Democratic Federation and the Socialist League claimed to be based upon Marxism but the other two spurned "imported" ideas and based their "Socialism" upon "reason," "justice," John Stuart Mill and Stanley Jevons, liberally mixed with religion and out-of-date philosophical ideas. All of them, however, had three common characteristics; they had programmes of immediate demands that were similar, they took their starting points from the class division in society, and, although they fought each other with considerable vigour and vituperation they exchanged writers and lecturers impartially and combined for various purposes such as mass celebrations and protests against particular acts of Capitalist tyranny.

The movement that led up to the formation of these organisations was the offspring of a number of different organisations centred in Liberal-Radical clubs, groups of freethinkers, land reformers, and admirers of Thomas Davidson—the American advocate of communities to "live the Higher Life," who delivered some lectures in England about that time. An acute trade depression in 1879-1880 and another in 1884 contributed to the growth of these movements as also did the propaganda of Henry George, whose book, "Progress and Poverty," was published in 1880. Some of those who took part in founding the new parties had come into personal contact with Marx and Engels although the latter, who were not greatly interested in them, were engrossed with the progress of the movement abroad.

Looking at the literature with which the Social Democratic movement commenced one is struck by its general lack of punch and lack of concentration upon essentials. The single-mindedness, the passion, and the vigour of the Chartist movement had not been recovered. The people who were in the van of the new movement appeared to speak and write in a condescending manner, as if from outside the working class; some of them became prominent in art, literature, science, diplomacy, and spiritualism. Among these were William Morris, Walter Crane, Bernard Shaw, William Archer, Frank Harris, Havelock Ellis, Sydney Olivier and Annie Besant,

although the most outstanding figures, from a theoretical standpoint, were H. M. Hyndman, Belfort Bax and Edward Aveling (the son-in-law of Marx). Frederick Lessner, an old member of the Communist League, and the International, also took a leading part in the movement although he tells us that Engels poked fun at him for his activities.

The real beginning of the movement appears to have been the formation of the Democratic Federation in 1881, although the Labour Emancipation League founded about the same time under the influence of Joseph Lane, had a clearer outlook and a more definitely working class basis. The Democratic Federation was founded by a group of radicals whose leading spirit was H. M. Hyndman, a man in a comfortable social position who had read Marx's "Capital" on a journey to the United States in 1880 and was later an occasional visitor to Marx's house. Hyndman published the results of his reading in a little book under the title of "England for All" in 1881. In the preface to this book he made a reference to the fact that he was indebted to the work of Marx but did not mention Marx's name, and neither Marx nor Engels ever forgave him for this omission. It appears to us that they were unduly sensitive and suspicious. The actual wording of the paragraph of which they had complained was as follows:

"For the ideas and much of the matter contained in Chapters II and III I am indebted to the work of a great thinker and original writer, which will, I trust, shortly be made accessible to the majority of my countrymen."

Marx looked upon Hyndman as one who had pillaged his writings, and done so badly, for the purpose of his own aggrandisement. The last sentence of the above quotation, however, does not bear this out as he called attention to, and anticipated the publication of, the work upon which he had drawn. Whatever may be said against much of Hyndman's practical activity he certainly did more than any other writer and lecturer to popularise both Marx's name and his theoretical ideas when they were little known in England, and he got little but scorn for his work.

As the Democratic Federation became more outspoken in its opposition to the Capitalistic basis of society it frightened away more and more of its Liberal-Radical support. As a conference in August, 1884, the name of the Federation was changed to the Social Democratic Federation and at the same time it adopted, with some modifications, the Object and most of the programme of the Labour Emancipation League, which joined forces with it. The object of the Federation was

now proclaimed to be "The Establishment of a Free Condition of Society based on the Principle of Political Equality, with Equal Social Rights for All, and the Complete Emancipation of Labour"; a vague and unsatisfactory Object that left room for different interpretations and marked the limited political understanding of those who adhered to it. Attached to the Object was a nine point programme, and a list of palliatives for immediate attention. The programme was apparently intended to be a picture of the shape of future society, as the list of palliatives are preceded by the phrase "as measures called for to palliate the evils of our existing society the Social Democratic Federation urges for immediate adoption," etc., and then follows a number of reforms such as the extinction of the National Debt, State ownership of the railways, national banks, cumulative taxation upon all incomes above a certain level, and so on. Two items in the part defined as the programme are a striking example of the confusion in the minds of the founders of the Federation. Here are the two items: "All officers or administrators to be elected by Equal Direct Adult Suffrage, and to be paid by the Community" and "The Means of Production Distribution and Exchange to be declared and treated as Collective or Common Property." Thus the founders of the Federation had in their minds a society in which common ownership of the means of production would exist side by side with an exchange of products through the medium of money. In spite of the acceptance of theoretical statements and arguments derived from Marx's work they had not grasped the fact that money is only required where exchange exists, and exchange only exists where there is private ownership of property.

To-day we are witnessing some of the fruits of this false and dangerous conception when State Capitalism, with all the paraphernalia of buying and selling, wage slavery, profits, and millionaires, is propagated by labour parties as an example of Socialism in being. When the means of production are commonly owned by the whole of society there will be neither the place nor the need for the exchange of products, they will simply be distributed according to the needs of people, and therefore money will disappear as it will have no function to perform. It appears to us that the confusion has arisen partly from a failure to grasp the implications of common ownership and partly from the occasional use by Marx and Engels, in some of their writings, of the expression "means of exchange" to denote means of distribution like transport, centres of distribution, and so forth. Unfortunately, the

Social Democratic Federation retained the reference to the common ownership of the "means of exchange" throughout the whole of its existence and thus helped to fortify the nonsensical views of numerous currency cranks. It may be added that if all the reforms advocated by the Federation had been accomplished the fundamental condition of the workers would have remained unchanged and yet, although 60 years have passed since they were framed, most of them are still the subject of wasted agitation.

Another booklet written by Hyndman, "Socialism Made Plain" which had been adopted by the 1883 Conference of the Democratic Federation, was now published as the official Manifesto of the Social Democratic Federation. Tacked on to this Manifesto were proposals for the State organisation of the unemployed, one item of which is a specimen of the feebleness of the rest. The first proposal is: "That no Government servant be employed at his or her present wages for a longer period than eight hours in each day. This alone would give room for many now out of work, seeing that the ordinary hours of work in the Post Office and other State Establishments are from ten to twelve hours, or more, in the day." If the framers of this proposal had looked back over the previous 20 or 30 years they would have seen that, although hours of work were gradually being reduced, unemployed figures were steadily going up. What they overlooked was that as long as a system of production exists that is rooted in buying and selling for the purpose of profit, unemployment is one of its essential and permanent features. Under Capitalism unemployment can neither be abolished nor even reduced to small dimensions permanently. If there were no unemployed to threaten the security of the employed there would be nothing to stop wage demands of the workers from eventually reaching a point that would threaten the existence of the profit upon which the Capitalist lives. While the Capitalists retain control of the political machinery and the workers remain politically ignorant such a threat to the basis of the system will not be allowed to become operative. It is true that during and since the last war the workers have been in a strong position, which they have only used to a limited extent, but these times will pass away, as the experience after the first Great War demonstrated

GILMAC.

(To be continued)

## SPEED AND COMMERCE AT LE MANS

**T**HE tragedy at Le Mans, French automobile racing venue, on 13th June during the 24-hour "endurance" test in which one of the drivers crashed to death among the spectators, 85 of whom were killed and others injured, is a grim reflection of the price men pay in the quest for speed—or so it appears on the surface.

The question arises, why all this speed? Why should men risk their lives in order that a German "Mercedes" shall "lick" an Italian "Ferrari," or an English "Jaguar" prove faster than both? Surely speed for speed's sake is not the only reason for ignoring a death roll of 85

and risking a repetition? Let Mr. Charles Faroux, Le Mans director, answer our queries. According to the *Bristol Evening World*, of 13th June, he says:

"In an interview with the Paris newspaper *Figaro*: 'Immediately after the accident I was asked to stop the race. In spite of the horror of the situation, I did not think the sporting trial should be stopped. The British set the example three years ago at Farnborough. Even when a disaster of such frightful proportions occurs, the rough law of sport dictates that the race shall go on.'"

After excusing himself on the grounds of a precedent set by the British and claiming what he describes as the dic-



tates of the "rough law of sport"—Mr. Faroux finally comes to the point and lets the proverbial cat out of the bag.

"M. Faroux said that if the race had been stopped . . . Firms could have sued us for hundreds of millions of francs, arguing that we had made them lose terrific advantages obtained by a victor in the 24-hour Le Mans Race." (Bristol Evening World, 13th June.)

Apparently it's the dictates of the "rough" law of commerce that worries Mr. Faroux, but in the trying circumstances he can be excused a little confusion of words. And so, on with the race, despite the dead and dying, for what is at stake here is big business—national prestige and the sales that go with it for firms with a stake in the winning car. Be it engines, fuel, or sparking plugs, tyres, or even brake linings—there's nothing like a

win at Le Mans for pulling in the orders, human flesh and blood notwithstanding. Like all other commodities, cars are produced for sale only, and fast cars sell faster than slow ones in the same price range. Thus, rival firms compete against one another in the seething, constant struggle for trade which is expressed in incidents like Le Mans, with safety margins cut to beyond the limit. This is only one of the many facets of Capitalist trading conditions, which as we said earlier on, appears to be a question of speed—in actual fact it is a problem along with wars, poverty, slums and the H-Bomb. One cannot be solved without each other. Capitalism produces these problems; Socialism alone can bring an overdue end to them. Through the abolition of his wage-slave system, man will finally master his domestic affairs. G. R. RUSSELL.

## FROM PEONS TO IONS?

SINCE the Party's inauguration over half a century ago it has untiringly persevered with its case for Socialism, by the printed word, the street corner speakers, the platforms in public places—wherever the workers could be attracted, calling upon the world working class to end its problems of poverty, insecurity and mass slaughter.

The Party's irrefutable case, built on the materialist conception of history, has analysed the capitalist system with all its contradictions and shown the synthesis of this outmoded economic system, which is the only inevitable road humanity can eventually take—in a word—SOCIALISM.

Only the world's working class can establish this and ensure for the generations of the future the fuller, happier existence which is their natural goal. So far, sufficient numbers of the working class have not united for this common purpose. Nevertheless as it becomes more and more clear that capitalism has outlived its usefulness in social evolution, there accompanies it the hope that the

workers will decide to speed the progress by understanding, desiring and determining to establish a Socialist society.

Now for many, possibly the majority, the sands could be running out. The choice and ability of changing society may not continue in its role of a latent probability in the good time of the working class. Today humanity is fast coming face to face with an ultimatum—one which may be utter and final—the fact of thermo-nuclear fission. The choice is becoming oppressive, the decision vital; be politically active or become radio-active. Change the social system of monopoly and privilege for the few, and the defence of these by the victims of the many or become radio-active vapour dominated by the capricious winds.

It is preferable to be integrated in a carefree world of humans, than disintegrated in universal infinitude as radio-active ions. The choice is the prerogative of the working class—socialise or ironize!

C. G. C.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, July 1905.)

### Ethics and the Class Struggle

The victory of the Socialist working-class is the only possible ending of this great struggle. This, however, does not mean the subjection of the Capitalist class by the workers: it means the abolition of Capitalism and the end of classes, for the great unprivileged masses cannot secure equality of opportunity without abolishing class privilege, and privilege is based on private property. The triumph of the great working majority thus involves the emancipation of all from class oppression, for the interests of the toiling masses are fundamentally the interests of humanity.

Socialism, is then, the ethics of humanity, the necessary economic foundation of a national code of morality. The interests of the human race are bound up with the aspirations of the oppressed working-class in its struggle with Capitalist domination. As it has very truly been said: "Militant, the workers' cause is identified with class; triumphant, with humanity."

## MODERN TIMES

THE Rev. Frederick Thompson, chaplain of Lewes Prison, is reported as saying: "It is extraordinary the number of prisoners who do not want to go out again because they have not a happy home to go to." (Daily Express, 25/3/55). One is reminded of a scene from the film "Modern Times." Chaplin, because of his part in stopping a jail break, has been given preferential treatment. The prison is visited by a sanctimonious parson and his wife, after the parson and the governor have discussed Charlie's record. The Governor informs Charlie that he is now a free man, but Chaplin pleads to be allowed to stay a bit longer, preferring his life in prison to the dubious joys of his new-found freedom. However, he has to be free, whether he likes it or not, and apparently the same can be said of many of the prisoners from Lewes Prison. What an indictment on present day society, this so-called civilisation gets more like the madhouse every day.

PHIL MELLOR.

### PAMPHLETS

"The Socialist Party and War"	1/- (Post free 1/2)
"Russia Since 1917"	1/- " " 1/2
"The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years"	1/- " " 1/2
"The Racial Problem—A Socialist Analysis"	1/- " " 1/2
"Socialism"	4d. " " 6d.
"Socialism or Federal Union?"	4d. " " 6d.
"The Socialist Party: Its Principles and Policy"	4d. " " 6d.
"Is Labour Government the Way to Socialism?"	4d. " " 6d.
"Nationalisation or Socialism?"	6d. " " 8d.

All obtainable from the Literature Committee,  
52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

### GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

### VISIT TO BRIGHTON

West Ham Branch will pay a visit to Brighton on 3rd July, 1955, and hold a meeting in conjunction with Brighton Branch at the Fish Market. All members and friends are welcome. Approx. cost 11/- per head. Those interested please communicate with K. Hollanders, 5, York Road, Ilford, Essex. Tel. ILF 2884.

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA			
SUNDAYS			
Hyde Park	...	3 p.m.	
East Street (Walworth)	...	June 6th	11 a.m.
		" 13th	12.30
		" 20th	11 a.m.
		" 27th	12.30
Finsbury Park	...		11.30 a.m.
Whitstone Pond (Hampstead)	...		11.30 a.m.
Beresford Square (Woolwich)	...		8 p.m.
WEDNESDAYS			
Gloucester Road Station	...		8 p.m.
FRIDAYS			
Station Road, Ilford	...		8 p.m.
Earls Court Station	...		8 p.m.
SATURDAYS			
Jolly Butchers Hill (Nr. Wood Green Tube Stn.)	...		2.30 p.m. sharp
Ealing Green	...		3 p.m.
Rushcroft Road, Brixton	...		8 p.m.
Castle Street, Kingston	...		8 p.m.
Katherine Street, Croydon	...		4 p.m.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

### HACKNEY LECTURE

at  
CO-OP. HALL  
197 MARE STREET, E.8

on  
Monday, 18th July, at 8 p.m.

"The Politicians and the Cost of Living"—E. Hardy

### BOREHAM WOOD

Will members and sympathisers willing to cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood contact:

I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,  
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.



## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL**.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP**.—Secretary: R. Smith, 1, Littlejohn Street, Dundee. Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 13th and 27th July, 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**OLDHAM**.—Group meets Wednesdays 6th and 20th July, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

**RUGBY**.—Group meets alternate Mondays 11th and 25th July, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

**PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS**  
**PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2**  
Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

**SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.**  
Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee at the Head Office or to a local branch.

**DARTFORD LECTURE**  
at  
**LABOUR CLUB, LOWFIELD STREET, DARTFORD**  
at 8 p.m.  
Friday, 8th July: "Emergence of Socialism"—  
**S. CASH.**

## SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Please send SOCIALIST STANDARD for 12 months (6 months, 2/9) for which 5/6 is enclosed.

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(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address .....

(State if renewal or new subscriber.)

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD July, 1955

## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY**. Correspondence to Secretary. c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., meets at 7.30 p.m., 6th and 20th July.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT**. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON**. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

**CROYDON** meets each month, 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM AND CHELSEA**. Correspondence and enquiries to Jon Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3. Outdoor meetings, Gloucester Road, Wednesday evenings, 8 p.m. and Earls Court, Friday evenings, 8 p.m.

**GLASGOW (City)** meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Hall, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW (Kelvingrove)** meets alternate Mondays, 11th and 25th July, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. MacDougall, 42 Stoneyhurst Street, Possil Park, Glasgow, N.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** Enquiries to A. D. Oliver, 13, Penywern Road, Earls Court, S.W.5. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday, in month at 1, Broadhurst Gardens (nr. John Barnes).

**HIGH WYCOMBE** Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7-9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. Secretary: 54, Ashdale House, Seven Sisters Road, N.4.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, D. Russell, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 12th and 26th July, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. C. May, 1 Hanover Road, N.W.10.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**ST. PANCRAS** meets 1st and 3rd Fridays, 1st, 15th and 29th July, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o Head Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7-9.30 p.m., at Khavym, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Outdoor meetings Sunday 8 p.m. Bereford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 612 Vol. 51 August, 1955

### THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND SOCIALISM

### ENGLISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

### AFTER THE CONQUEST OF POWER

### MARXISM: PAST AND PRESENT

### CAN THE WORKERS UNDERSTAND

### JAMES MAXTON, THE BELOVED REBEL

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4

## The Only Remedy for Strikes

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION are agreed about the merits of Sir Walter Monckton and both pay tributes to the way he has handled strikes since he became Minister of Labour when the Tories came into office late in 1951. Verbal bouquets have also been presented by the T.U.C. and by the Railway Unions' officials.

It must be, therefore, that Sir Walter is thought to have been very successful. But what is it he is supposed to have succeeded in doing? He certainly has not been able to prevent strikes from taking place. During the period of three years and five months from January, 1952, to the end of May, 1955, strikes averaged over 1,900 a year; which works out at about six new ones every day of the working week. His admirers cannot even claim that his average is better than his predecessors, for during the last five years of Labour Government (1947—1951) the average was only five a day. (These and other figures are taken from the *Labour Gazette*, May 1955, the *Annual Abstract of Statistics*, 1954, and *Labour Statistics*, 1913).

Socialists hold that strikes arise out of the present organisation of society. In our day and in all other countries work is carried on by men and women who are employed to do it and are paid a wage by their employer. The employer is sometimes an individual who owns a business; sometimes a company controlled by a Board of Directors on behalf of the shareholders and sometimes a Government Department or a Board set up by the Government; but these forms of control are all alike in the important respect that in all of them orders are given to the workers, and discipline is maintained over them, by or on behalf of the employer or employing body. The workers do not own the factory, farm or railway, on which they work, nor the things they produce there. Their main concern is the wage they get and the conditions under which they work and this interest brings them into endless conflict with the employers' aim of making profit and cutting costs. That is why workers strike; not because one Minister of Labour is more or less clever or more or less urbane than another.

Some Governments try to avoid strikes by arbitration while others (including the Russian Government) stamp them out by heavy penalties and force, but none of them can run this system of wage-labour without there being friction and discontent. The Socialist remedy is to change the basic organisation of society so that the relationship of employer and employed disappears along with the division into an owning class, the capitalists, and a working class, all those who depend for



their living on selling their mental and physical energies.

The social reformers do not believe this to be practicable or necessary. One group, the Labour Party, believed for years (though recent events have shaken their confidence) that the setting up of Whitley Councils, Joint Industrial Councils, etc., and the encouragement of arbitration, would lessen industrial unrest and that the best remedy of all was to have the workers employed by a nationalized board instead of by a company board of directors.

#### More Strikes than Fifty Years Ago

So the Labour Party told us to expect that in this respect things would get better and better and strikes would disappear.

What has happened is quite different.

In the five years 1900-1904 industrial disputes (strikes and lock-outs) averaged 495 a year; in 1947-51 they averaged 1,593 a year and in the period of Tory rule, 1,907 a year. The number has steadily increased since 1952.

In these three same periods the average number of workers, directly or indirectly involved, grew from 166,000 a year in 1900-1904, to 432,000 a year in 1947-51 and to

773,000 a year in 1952-5. It has steadily increased since 1952.

In one respect, however, the trend has been in the other direction. Strikes nowadays are often local and are usually shorter; in consequence, while the number of days lost through stoppages averaged 2,900,000 a year in 1900-1904, it was 1,850,000 in 1947-51 and 2,300,000 in 1952-5.

It is, however, rising and the Prime Minister said on July 5 that the recent railway, coal and dock disputes have cost 2,000,000 days between them.

Two of these industries are nationalized and in the third (the docks) employment is through the National Dock Labour Board, set up by the Government.

In the coal mines in 1954 there were 1,464 strikes, costing 468,000 days and involving 204,400 workers. (In these as in other figures the Ministry of Labour ignores strikes affecting less than 10 workers or costing less than one day unless the total of days lost exceeds 100).

The Labour leaders, like the Tories, are trying to think up new ways to eliminate strikes but their thinking in this field is bound to lead nowhere because they rule out in advance the probability of a fundamentally new classless, social relationship, that offered by Socialism. H.

## ENGLISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

(Continued)

In January, 1884, the Democratic Federation brought out a weekly periodical, "Justice," which had a hard struggle to exist owing to lack of funds, and was eventually taken over by the Twentieth Century Press, a publishing company whose share capital was provided by small subscriptions from workers and small organisations. A monthly periodical was also issued privately with Belfort Bax and J. L. Joynt as editors. The title of this publication was "To-Day" and it claimed to be a journal of Scientific Socialism, but would open its columns "to all expressions of advanced opinion." Its contributors were drawn from a very wide field, including Eleanor Marx, Morris, Lafargue, Hyndman, Shaw, Havelock Ellis, Walt Whitman, Michael Davitt, Stepniak, William Archer, and Henry Arthur Jones.

Just before the Democratic Federation changed its name another section of the Radicals formed the Fabian Society in January, 1884. The Society was mainly composed of people drawn together to discuss the "higher life" ideas of Thomas Davidson and was infused with an "intellectual" atmosphere; its smug and self-satisfied members were keenly conscious of their mental superiority to the rest of society. They were opposed to sweeping changes, proposing to gradually permeate society, both "Upper" and "lower" classes, with a leaven of "advanced" ideas until it had imperceptibly changed its form. They were to be the intellectual leaders of the bovine herd. The new form of society at which they aimed eventually emerged as State Capitalism, though they designated it Socialism.

The Society was soon joined by Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb, Annie Besant and Sydney Olivier. Most of the early members of the Fabian Society were government officials, and their occupation led them to believe that they were in a position to influence legislation in the direction of their aspirations. After 60 years of their efforts one

result they appear to have achieved is to make the exploiting machinery work more smoothly! In the direction of education, however, their members have accomplished some good work examples of which are Sidney Webb's "History of Trade Unionism," Graham Wallis's "Francis Place," and the voluminous and pointed ridicule of Bernard Shaw. The establishment of the London School of Economics was also an offspring of their work. For the rest they were opposed to the fundamental ideas of Marxism and drew economic nurture from Stanley Jevons' antiquated supply and demand theory of value. At the end of Hyndman's "Economics of Socialism," there is a chapter entitled "The Final Futility of Final Utility" which is a crushing answer to Fabian conceptions of economics.

The social position of most of the Fabians, government officials and professional men, was responsible for their snobbish outlook; they felt themselves to be the destined leaders of the movement for social regeneration. One of their members, Ramsay MacDonald, expressed this outlook clearly in an article he wrote for "To-day," in March, 1887, entitled "A Rock Ahead." This is how he put it:

"I would therefore plead for stronger and stronger efforts in intellectual circles, and a vigorous propaganda amongst the thoughtful and reasonable; that thus the 'party of physical needs' may be weakened, and Socialism stand forth before the eyes of men, a stage in the process of intellectual development. When we are strong in the strength of intellectual faith, the discontented will be at our command, and as explosive as ever. We may have to use them or we may not; but should the worst befall their destructive power will be skilfully directed; it will not cause ruin, but will clear a way; it will be the instrument, but not the life; the tool, but not the designer."

Could intellectual priggishness go farther than this? And this was the man who eventually became the first Labour Prime Minister!

In spite of their false ideas on Economics, however, some of the Fabians, Bernard Shaw was an example, did realise that those who lived by the sale of their labour-power belonged to one class opposed to the Capitalist class, and that however high their apparent wages or salaries were they were all paid on the basis of subsistence; what it cost them to live in order to do the job for which they were paid. Here is an instance from one of Shaw's early writings that is worth while bringing to light again:

"The division into classes with various standards of comfort which always occurs among slaves, and which is due to the necessity for educating and maintaining the slave who is a doctor or a barrister very much better than the slave who is a mere hewer of wood and drawer of water, makes the highly skilled slave despise the unskilled, the unskilled hate and envy the skilled; makes the upper regard classification with the lower as an intolerable degradation, and the lower spurn classification with the higher as a hypocritical effort to reconcile him to his inferiority. Organisation of the proletariat, and recognition by them of their common interest, is thus defeated by class feeling, which is always bitterest among the worst off. It is doubtful whether Dukes habitually despise beggars; but it is certain that butlers despise scullions, artisans, labourers and professional men tradesmen. The solicitor's daughter must not know the young lady from Peter Robinson's, nor will the 'amalgamated engineer' permit his wife to demean herself by visiting the spouse of the carman. The proprietors, on the other hand, though their properties vary in size, seem to understand that they belong to the same class; and so, whatever petty jealousies and disputes as to precedence may arise between them, they are always united against the proletariat. There is a saying that a man can be no more than a gentleman (a gentleman being one who lives by robbing the poor). There is no such saying as that a man can be no more than a worker, there is, on the contrary, a widely spread feeling that he cannot be much less, short of being a convict or a pauper. Hence the proprietors succeed in maintaining their privileges against enormous odds in point of numbers. The proletariat, excepting the fragment in the trade unions, are a mere mob; and even the trade union regiments seem to mistrust one another far more than they hate the enemy, to whose ranks everyone of their individual members is eager to desert if a commission there be offered to him."

(From "Our Corner," September, 1887.)

If one makes allowances for some looseness of phrasing and for the backward organisation of the workers at the time, it will be seen that Shaw here senses the social division into two antagonistic classes and also what constituted a member of the working class. He had no illusions about the social status of the so-called intellectuals; he appreciated that they were just members of the working class. Where he went astray was in believing that this section was marked out to lead and direct the movement for social emancipation.

The confused outlook of the Fabian Society was illustrated in the report they submitted to the 1896 Conference of the Second International, which contains the following paragraph:—

"The Fabian Society discards such phrases as 'the abolition of the wages system' which can only mislead the public as to the aims of Socialism. Socialism does not involve the abolition of the wages system, but the establishment of standard allowances for the maintenance of all workers by the community in its own service, as an alternative to wages fixed by the competition of destitute men and women for private employment, as well as for commercial profits, commissions, and all other speculative and competitive forms of remuneration. In short, the Fabian Society, far from desiring to abolish wages, wishes to secure them for everybody."

What else is this but State Capitalism? How far the Fabians got with their scheme for social regeneration is re-

vealed by one of the founders of the Society, E. R. Pease. In his "History of the Fabian Society" he sums it up in words that are just as true today as when they were written in 1925:

"But it must be confessed that we have made but little progress along the main road to Socialism. Private ownership of capital and land flourishes almost as vigorously as it did 30 years ago." (Page 243.)

That is an expression of the final futility of the policy of permeation—despair.

Towards the end of 1884 there was a split in the Social Democratic Federation and some of its most capable members, including the majority of its Executive Committee, broke away to form another party, the Socialist League. The cause of the split was a mixture of personal feeling and dissatisfaction over policy. The practical policy of the Social Democratic Federation during elections, a policy that it kept to during most of its existence, was the making of pacts with the opposition to fight whatever government held power; at one time they accepted support from the Tories to oppose the Liberals and at another time they did the reverse. In 1884 it was alleged that money from the Tories was accepted to support two of their candidates against the Liberals, who formed the government of the day.

There was a personal antagonism to Hyndman on the ground that he was ambitious and was trying to dominate party policy, but there was also a more important difference, the one that eventually destroyed the Socialist League, an opposition to political action that pushed it over to the anarchist position. At first this appeared as a claim by its prominent members that the workers were not yet sufficiently advanced to justify the putting up of Socialist candidates for election and that for some time to come the party should concentrate all its efforts upon educating the workers; in time this attitude drifted into an opposition to parliament itself as a perfidious instrument of Capitalism, a body in which it was impossible to do anything except lose one's head and one's principles. In the eyes of the League, therefore, parliamentary action became a thing that was tainted with evil and should not be touched.

The financial backbone of the Socialist League was William Morris.

Owing to international connections, principally through Eleanor Marx and Frederick Lessner, the league attracted attention that had been withheld from the Social Democratic Federation; an attention that the latter had

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partly lacked on account of the antipathy of Marx and Engels to Hyndman. The League soon had its own periodical, the "Commonweal," the first number appearing in February, 1885, edited by Morris and Aveling. The March number contained congratulatory messages from Liebknecht, Bebel, Lafargue, Vaillant, Kautsky, Frankel, Lavroff, Stepniak, and Domela Nienwenhuis (the latter, an adherent of Marx at the time, was responsible for the rise of the social democratic movement in Belgium, but he later became an anarchist).

From the beginning a strain of anti-parliamentarism ran through the League's pronouncements and the May, 1885, number contained an article by Joseph Lane opposed to the capture of parliament. In November, 1885, the League published a pamphlet on the forthcoming General Election which concluded with the words:

"Compare this ideal which we International Revolutionary Socialists offer you, and which it lies in your power to realise, with the miserable pettiness of parliamentary life, and the mean lies and hollow pledges of an election contest, and then surely you will agree with us that it is your business NOT TO VOTE but to prepare yourselves to bring about the SOCIAL REVOLUTION, and to accept its happy consequences."

The leaflet contains quite a good statement of the position of the workers and criticisms of political parties, but it does not give any indication of how Socialism is to be achieved. All it has to say on the point is "if you will but claim it, you will be the world!" It would certainly have been helpful if some idea had been given of how the claim was to be implemented other than by voice and pen. In the course of a few years the League was completely captured by the anarchists and ceased to have any further influence on the progress of the working class movement.

The first page of the first number of the "Commonweal" contains the Manifesto of the League; it was the clearest and soundest attempt to formulate Socialist principles put forward in England up to the end of the Nineteenth Century. The following are some paragraphs from this Manifesto which speak for themselves:

"We come before you as a body advocating the principles of Revolutionary International Socialism; that is, we seek a change in the basis of Society—a change which would destroy the distinctions of classes and nationalities.

"As the civilised world is at present constituted, there are two classes of Society—the one possessing wealth and the instruments of its production, the other producing wealth by means of those instruments but only by the leave and for the use of the possessing classes.

"These two classes are necessarily in antagonism to one another. The possessing class, or non-producers, can only live as a class on the unpaid labour of the producers—the more unpaid labour they can wring out of them, the richer they will be; therefore the producing class—the workers—are driven to strive to better themselves at the expense of the possessing class, and the conflict between the two is ceaseless. Sometimes it takes the form of open rebellion, sometimes of strikes, sometimes of mere widespread mendicancy and crime; but it is always going on in one form or other, though it may not always be obvious to the thoughtless looker-on.

"We have spoken of unpaid labour; it is necessary to explain what that means. The sole possession of the producing class is the power of labour inherent in their bodies; but since, as we have already said, the rich possess all the instruments of labour, that is, the land, capital, and machinery, the producers or workers are forced to sell their sole possession, the power of labour, on such terms as the possessing class will grant them.

"These terms are, that after they have produced enough to keep them in working order, and enable them to beget children to take their places when they are worn

out, the surplus of their products shall belong to the possessors of property, which bargain is based on the fact that every man working in a civilised community can produce more than he needs for his own sustenance.

"This relation of the possessing class to the working class is the essential basis of the system of producing for profit, on which our modern Society is founded."

"Nationalisation of the land alone, which many earnest and sincere persons are now preaching, would be useless so long as labour was subject to the fleecing of surplus value inevitable under the Capitalist system.

"No better solution would be that State Socialism by whatever name it may be called, whose aim it would be to make concessions to the working class while leaving the present system of capital and wages still in operation; no number of merely administrative changes, until the workers are in possession of all political power, would make any real approach to Socialism.

"The Socialist League therefore aims at the realisation of complete Revolutionary Socialism, and well knows that this can never happen in any one country without the help of the workers of all civilisation"

As far as it goes there is not much that the Socialist would object to in the above and it is noteworthy that it appeared before the Erfurt Programme of the German Social Democratic Party had been formulated. On the back of the same number of the "Commonweal" is printed the "Provisional Rules," the preamble to which is a replica of the Preamble to the Provisional Rules of the first International Working Men's Association, which was written by Karl Marx. The Rules themselves have one important defect; they give the Central Council too much power, including the power to dissolve branches.

Engels showed his preference for the Socialist League by contributing two articles to the "Commonweal"; one was a criticism of Henry Broadhurst's translation of portions of Capital, and the other was a brief history of the previous 40 years. The latter was reproduced by him in his 1892 Preface to "The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844."

During the few years of its existence the "Commonweal" published some excellent propagandist articles but also a good deal that was weak, vague and misleading. Its attitude to political action in particular was confusing and conflicting; it hunted with both the hare and the hounds, gradually throwing its weight more and more against political action and flirting with the anarchists. Morris was its most prolific writer, producing articles on a wide variety of subjects; some of his poems and essays that appeared in this periodical were later reprinted in book form and constitute a large part of his claim to popularity. There were two noteworthy features of the "Commonweal"; it did not contain any advertisements except those relating to meetings and similar activities, and it was entirely controlled by the League itself.

GILMAC.

(To be continued)

## YOUR HELP IS NECESSARY

The SOCIALIST STANDARD is sold at a considerable loss and it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep the price at 4d. There are two ways of reducing the monthly loss. One would be to increase the price. The other is to increase the circulation. This is where you can help by trying to get new readers.

WE MUST INCREASE THE SALE OF THE S.S.  
YOUR HELP IS NECESSARY.

## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS



**Ireland.** Although activity in the S.P. of Ireland has not been so brisk, owing to the departure of some members for England, the Comrades are glad to report that new members are taking the places of the "emigrants" and they are looking forward to good results in the near future. Members from Belfast met the Dublin Comrades at Easter and exchanged views and discussed ways and means of extending their propaganda.

**Propaganda in Nottingham.** A party speaker visited Nottingham for a week's propaganda in July. It was that first sunny week, so there was no set-back with the weather.

On the first Saturday in the month two London members arrived and with the support of local comrades two thoroughly successful meetings were held over the week-end. Something like five dozen SOCIALIST STANDARDS were sold, not counting back numbers and quite a few pamphlets. One speaker then returned to London.

Throughout the following week two meetings were held every day (with the exception of Monday and Wednesday—Wednesday being the night the local branch meet).

The results and general reception of the Party's position at lunch-time and evening meetings were most encouraging.

Audiences averaged 200 and the total literature sales and collections for the total of 13 meetings was almost £6. The questions and attentiveness of the audiences generally was very good. Despite the fact that the Royal Show took place during the week and numbers of visitors came along to one meeting the local temperament was unperturbed.

Of the local members who supported the meetings one comrade cycled well over 40 miles a day from Burton-on-Trent, and at the age of 68 exhibited remarkable enthusiasm; he was mainly responsible for selling literature and taking collections.

The case for Socialism was put, with the abolition of the wages system, and class-less world, production for use, in our usual uncompromising manner and although a lot remains to be done there was quite a bit of agreement, especially among those who came most often. So, from every point of view for those concerned in spreading Socialist ideas, the first week in July was a most encouraging and worthwhile week.

**Rugby Group Members** were very active during the General Election and disposed of six dozen SOCIALIST STANDARDS in addition to a considerable number of the Election Manifesto. They also sent copies of the Manifesto to local newspapers, together with an explanatory letter, but none of the newspapers made comment in their columns. At propaganda meetings at least two members of the audience have promised to attend the meeting of the Group.

Having made the Party's name known in the locality the Group members look forward to follow this up with further activity.

P.H.

**Ealing Branch.** After the hectic activity of the May Sales Drive, the branch will pursue a quieter course for the next few months. Canvassing will be confined to supplying the "regulars" and following up the new contacts made in May. Although it seems early days yet, arrangements are already being made for the winter season; film shows, another trip to a museum, and the first series of lectures, are projected for the period up to Christmas.

The second of the branch's special propaganda trips to Southsea is scheduled for the early part of August, and, given reasonable weather, we hope it will be even more successful than the first trip in June.

Will all members please note that there will be no branch meetings on the 19th and 26th August, and 2nd September. The branch will re-assemble on 9th September, and all members are asked to make a special point of attending on that date to hear details of the activities planned for the winter season.

**Fulham and Chelsea Branch** report that since the commencement of their outdoor propaganda season 15 meetings have been held at Earls Court and Gloucester Road. Most of these have been good, with audiences of at least 60 and on occasions as many as 200.

Although there has been regular support from members and sympathisers, more members are needed to support the commencement of the meetings—at 8 o'clock and to sell literature. Weather permitting, these meetings will continue well into the Autumn. Sympathisers and others wishing to contact the branch are asked to write to Jon Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

"The Western Socialist," published by the World Socialist Party of the United States is available regularly at Head Office, address below. This by-monthly publication contains many interesting articles on American politics, Socialism, and other topical items. The May-June issue contains an open letter to Mr. Stassen, Secretary of "Peace," an article entitled "Will the 'H' bomb be used?", one on economics, and another on the Object and Principles of the Socialist Party.

If you cannot obtain a regular copy at our meetings or from our literature sellers, send a P.O. for 3/9 (six issues post free) or 7/6 (12 issues post free) to the Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.



# THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND SOCIALISM

(We have received the following letter of criticism, to which is appended our reply.—Ed. Comm.)

Golders Green, N.W.11.  
4.7.55.

Dear Sirs,

The July SOCIALIST STANDARD reprinted a quotation from an issue of 50 years ago "Militant the workers' cause is identified with class; triumphant, with humanity." Recently (Oct. 1954) you reprinted the same quotation, which seems to indicate that you endorse it to-day. I have given considerable thought to the attitude to Socialism which is summed up in these few words, and I would appreciate it if you would allow me to state my point of view, together with whatever reply you may consider necessary or desirable on behalf of the S.P.G.B.

The first thing that strikes me about the quotation is that it states an obvious—even tautological—truth about the class struggle that characterises all property societies. The "cause" of the people who are organised as a class in society can only be seen as a class cause—they are on one side or other of the struggle between those who buy and those who sell labour power. These causes and this struggle—militant or otherwise—are unquestionably a major feature of capitalist society. In so far as there is any triumph in this struggle, it is when one side gains a victory at the expense of the other—a class victory.

There is, however another kind of struggle going on in society—the struggle for Socialism. On the one hand are Socialists: people who believe that a classless society is both desirable and practicable. On the other are those who are not Socialists, and who either support or acquiesce in the continuation of Capitalist institutions. The struggle between these two groups of people is a different kind of struggle from the first because it is concerned not with class interest but with *social* interest. Triumph here means that co-operation, harmony, social equality, will have ousted competition, warfare (including class warfare) and commodity relations.

Bearing this in mind, it seems hardly possible for the appeal to establish Socialism to be a class appeal. Much more is it a call to all people to be "integrated in a care-free world of humans," as one of your writers puts it. This, of course, is not to say that Socialists should, in their propaganda, disregard the fact of the class struggle within Capitalism. It is a plea that the case for Socialism should be presented clearly for what it is—the triumph of humanity through the work of humanity.

I would like to add a few words on another point quoted in the S.S. that "the interests of the human race are bound up with the aspirations of the oppressed working-class in its struggle with Capitalist domination." Everyone championing a sectional interest claims that it really represents the interests of all. At a recent political meeting I attended, several speakers tried to persuade the audience that movements for colonial self-government (i.e. nationalist movements) were really international in character. How easily Socialists can see the fallacy of that claim! Yet does it not appear that the S.P.G.B. is a victim of the same fallacy in claiming that a class movement can establish classless society

Yours sincerely,  
S. R. PARKER.

## REPLY

The quotations to which our critic refers are those published under the heading "Fifty Years Ago" in our issues of October 1954 and July 1955.

The two articles from which these quotations were reproduced appeared in our issues of October 1904 and July 1905. They both express the point of view of the Socialist against that of the Reformists who, while reluctantly having to admit that the class struggle is a fact, want to disregard it. The first was an attack on Keir Hardie, who was one of these, and it included a quotation from Belfort Bax, who wrote of the "Benevolent old gentleman who says, 'Let us ignore classes, let us regard each other as human beings.'"

The second article (July 1905), again attacked those who, admitting the reality of the class struggle, refused to recognise the necessity of basing working-class political action on that reality, on the ground that "it is immoral, that it stirs up strife and sets one class against another." It admitted that this was logical for those (Keir Hardie was one) who based their "Socialism" on the New Testament and its injunction "Resist not evil"; it also pointed out how this injunction serves the interest of the Capitalist class and fits in with their class morality which teaches the workers that any resistance by them against their exploitation is immoral. The article went on to show that as no propertied class ever voluntarily gives up its privileged position, and as the ending of class society is in the interest of humanity, "the only class that can be relied on for the abolition of privilege and power to exploit, is the unprivileged propertyless working class."

One point made in the article was:—"Not indeed that we must hate the individual Capitalist, for he is the product of his circumstances; but in the interests of humanity the firmest action must be taken. The power to exploit must be wrested from the parasites."

It should not be necessary to reproduce again the passage quoted in our July issue, but we do so because our critic's letter so grotesquely misunderstands what it contains.

The quotation was:—

"The victory of the Socialist working-class is the only possible ending of this great struggle. This, however, does not mean the subjection of the Capitalist class by the workers: it means the abolition of Capitalism and the end of classes, for the great unprivileged masses cannot secure equality of opportunity without abolishing class privilege, and privilege is based on private property. The triumph of the great working majority thus involves the emancipation of all from class oppression, for the interests of the toiling masses are fundamentally the interests of humanity. Socialism, is then, the ethics of humanity, the necessary economic foundation of a rational code of morality. The interests of the human race are bound up with the aspirations of the oppressed working-class in its struggle with Capitalist domination. As it has very truly been said: 'Militant, the workers' cause is identified with class triumphant, with humanity.'"

(In our July issue the word rational in line two of the second paragraph was in error given as national).

Our critic misrepresents the substance of this quotation by the peculiar and quite incorrect meaning he gives to the term class struggle and by his failure to read simple phrases in their obvious unmistakable meaning.

He thinks, as will be seen from the second paragraph

of his letter, that the class struggle consists of "the struggle between those who buy and those who sell labour-power." Historically class struggles have sometimes been between propertied classes, as for example between Feudal landlords and the rising Capitalists. In modern society the predominant class division is between the Capitalists who own the means of production and distribution and the propertyless working class. This is the basis and substance of the class struggle; the struggle over wages is merely a restricted aspect of the class struggle, the one to which the workers are normally confined because the State power precludes other activities on their part. The culmination of the modern class struggle is the political struggle of a Socialist working class for Socialism.

But even for non-Socialist workers the wages struggle does not represent the whole of their aspirations. In our own time we have seen workers, when conditions made this temporarily possible, seize possession of the employers' factories, as in Italy after World War I, and the Syndicalist movement before that war aimed at "taking and holding." In the early 19th century workers' movements (e.g. the co-operative pioneers) aspired to create a new society, though their aim was vague and they failed to understand the means necessary for its achievement.

Next our critic evidently fails to notice that our quotation begins with a reference to "the Socialist working-class," and fails to notice the reference in the same quotation to "the aspirations of the oppressed working class in

its struggle with Capitalist domination." "Aspiration" is defined in the dictionary as "noble ambition," and Capital domination does not merely mean the employers' resistance to wage increases. So, departing entirely from the plain meaning of the passage, he criticises it as if what had been written there was something like this:—

"The victory of those non-Socialist workers whose aims extend no further than the struggle for another 3d. an hour embodies the aspirations of the Socialist working class and is in the interest of humanity." In the light of what the quotation actually says the criticisms of it contained in the letter are almost entirely irrelevant.

Rejecting the Socialist conception of a working-class becoming Socialist, and taking political action to end class society, our critic offers us instead the conception of a "group" of Socialists struggling against a "group" of non-Socialists, but omits to tell us how this is to lead to Socialism.

He concludes by asserting, without any discernable reason, that a Socialist working-class, constituting the great majority of society, cannot have a classless society though that will be its aim, but informs us that a "group" (a section only of society) can do so by struggling against the defenders of Capitalism.

What the example of self-styled Nationalists claiming to be Internationalists has to do with the case we do not know.

ED. COMM.

## MAUREEN!

MAUREEN was such a nice girl. Everyone was delighted when she landed a good job. Some people had been a bit worried when she was in the third year. Got into bad company and caught smoking in the lavatory! But later, thank goodness, after a few talkings to she had responded splendidly.

Just before leaving she had been a modest girl. Her speech had improved, so had her manners and appearance. There was no difficulty in recommending her for a good job.

She got a post with one of the best firms in the City. "I am pleased!" said Miss Prim.

She had done so well in the dramatic class. Why, her new employers were so good that when she asked for a day off, only a day after she had started, they said "Certainly!" You shall have full pay and we hope you will continue your drama studies! "What better treatment could you have than that?"

Maureen came back after the first week to tell us how happy she was.

Imagine our surprise when she came again just before the Easter holidays to say that she was no longer there.

But why? Maureen! Surely the money was good, and it's one of the best firms for staff welfare in the whole of London!

It appears that in three short weeks Maureen's rosy dreams of a bright and happy future had evaporated.

The first week was jolly. The second a bit dull. The third very nearly drove poor Maureen balmy. Her job was examining banknotes, in a room full of other girls examining banknotes. All day long she sat at a table with a strong concentrated light looking at banknotes,

hundreds of banknotes, thousands of banknotes. In the room she met and spoke to girls who had been examining banknotes for five years, and would go on looking at banknotes for another 25 years.

(Continued on page 126)





## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

AUGUST,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## LABOUR PARTY PROGRAMME FOR THE YEAR 2000

The idea of encouraging the donkey forward by dangling a carrot a short distance in front of his nose is an ancient one but even the oldest tricks can be changed and Mr. Albu, Labour M.P. for Edmonton, has discovered a startling variation.

Like other Labour M.P.s he has had to realise that the Labour electoral carrot offered to the voters in the recent General Election was not successful in enticing them to the polling booth for 1,500,000 of former Labour voters this time refused to go in and put their cross. So Mr. Albu, who is a member of the Executive Committee of the Fabian Society has been thinking up a new programme for Labour. He spoke about it at a meeting of the Central London Fabian Society on June 29. He said:—

"There should be adequate incentives, but property ownership should be reduced by estate duties and a capital gains tax so that by the year 2000 the distribution of inherited wealth would be similar to that of taxed income today."

(Manchester Guardian, 30 June, '55.)

Mr. Albu is not proposing that inequality of accumulated wealth be eliminated but only that it should be lessened, so that it would not exceed the smaller, but still very great, difference between the annual income of the rich man and the wages of the poor. So we progress! Many years ago the Fabian Society, and later the Labour Party, planned to do something "immediately" about this inequality. Now Mr. Albu suggests postponing the completion of half a plan until a date 45 years ahead, by which time most of the present generation will be dead.

The basis on which Capitalism exists is the monopoly

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD August, 1955

by a minority, of the accumulated wealth of society. It is the cause of the poverty of the many. This has been the central theme of the Socialist case against Capitalism and it was known to Mr. Albu's Fabian Society long, long ago.

Two thirds of a century ago Mr. Sidney Webb wrote in the Fabian Essays 1889 ("Historic" page 60).

"If private property in land and capital necessarily keeps the many workers permanently poor (through no fault of their own) in order to make the few idlers rich (from no merit of their own), private property in land and capital will inevitably go the way of the feudalism which it superseded."

In 1908 the Fabian Society had phrased the known inequality of wealth in the statement "about one seventh part of the population owns far more than half of the entire accumulated wealth, public and private, of the United Kingdom."

(Fabian Tract No. 7 Capital and Land. Page 10.)

Sometime later they expressed it in the form "ten per cent. of the population own 90 per cent. of the wealth."

In this form it was used in articles in the Daily News in 1916 and reproduced in the Fabian Tract When Peace Comes. (P. 28).



This proposition has been doing service ever since in the propaganda of the Labour Party. It was featured in their election programme of 1918, Labour and the New Social Order and 31 years later, in 1949, a Minister in the Labour Government confirmed that it still represented the division of wealth. (Mr. Glenvil Hall, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, 'Hansard' May 18, 1949). After all these years and though we have had three Labour Governments, nothing whatever has been done to end the state of affairs that the early Fabians recognised as the cause of poverty. Incidentally, the Fabian Society in 1908, proposed to take over the land and capital "without compensation (though not without such relief to expropriated individuals as may seem fit to the community.)" (Fabian Tract Capital and Land 1908. P. 18.)

The Fabian Society named itself after a Roman General, Quintus Fabius Maximus, known as the "Delayer," who perfected harrying tactics described as "masterly inactivity," and whose motto was said to be "make haste slowly."

But Fabius did win some notable battles and would have been surprised if he could have known that an organisation named after him was to do nothing at all

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD August, 1955

to win its major battle for some 70 years and an executive member was then to propose aiming at some slight action 45 years later still.

Muddled as the early Fabians were in their twin notions that capitalism would disappear of its own accord or alternatively could be modified by reforms into becoming an equalitarian society, they were mental giants com-

pared with those who have followed them in the Labour Party.

In the meantime the rich one-tenth still own nine-tenths of the accumulated wealth; and there is still no solution to the poverty problem except the Socialist one of transforming the means of production and distribution into the common property of society as a whole.

## MARXISM: PAST AND PRESENT

("R. N. Carew Hunt" Published by Geoffrey Bles)

THIS book is a mine of reference on Marxism. While the author may have diligently quarried for his treasure, precious little has been brought to the surface that materially adds to existing stocks of knowledge on the subject. The book in fact is not so much a solo as a sound track for a massed anti-Marxist choir: so much so, that the author's voice seems but the *sotto voce* of a "whispering baritone." In addition, he attempts to decant the whole quart of Marxism into the half-pint bottle of 175 pages, thus making impossible any systematic treatment of the many issues raised.

The author essays to show that the totalitarian empire of Russia is the melancholy sequel to Marx's doctrine of "the dictatorship of the proletariat." Presumably, had there been no Marx there would have been no Lenin, no October Revolution. The sequence of events in Russia might then have told a happier story. Once again, then, Marx takes on the legendary role of history's "wicked uncle."

One of the author's contentions, then—the one we shall deal with—is that both Leninism and Stalinism are rooted in Marx's doctrine of "the dictatorship of the proletariat." The author adopts, however, the dubious procedure of interpretation rather than testimony, of inference in lieu of evidence. He selects passages from Marx and Engels compares them with statements of Lenin and stress similarities. He never selects passages which reveal differences.

Yet those differences are of an order to show not a crucial connection but antithetical relations between Marxism and Leninism. While Marx and Engels were never specific as to what they meant by "the dictatorship of the proletariat," they were always consistent with the generally accepted notion of democracy. Lenin's political doctrine did not characterize democracy but only caricatured it in a debased Soviet form. Marx's political theory carried no suggestion of a one-party device for the capture of political power. On the contrary, it presupposed "free elections" via the polling-booth. That was the method of the Paris Commune—and that, said Engels in his most vigorous statement on the subject, was "the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Engels, in the Critique of the Erfurt Programme, declared: "Our party and the working class can only gain political supremacy under the political regime of a democratic republic. This is even the specific form of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the great French revolution has already shown." (Marx Engels Correspondence, P. 486.)

For Lenin the organizational form of the proletarian dictatorship was political centralism, with its military dictatorship and denial of any right of appeal from decisions made by the ruling body. The sinister sequel to this was dramatically summed-up by Lenin himself when he stated:

"The Soviet Socialist Democracy is in no way incompatible with the rule and dictatorship of one person... this was explained to and accepted by the Central Executive Committee a long time ago" (Socialist Party of Canada Pamphlet The Russian Revolution, p. II).

Mr. Carew Hunt's arrangement of quotations serves to conceal, not reveal, the antithetical views of Marx and Lenin. Thus, Lenin is quoted: "The transformation of the proletariat into the ruling class is identical with democracy." While this in the letter agrees with the Communist Manifesto's statement "The constitution of the proletariat into the ruling class is the conquest of democracy," in the spirit it is utterly at variance.

In fact, Lenin's notion of the conquest of political power by a class-conscious proletariat was perfectly consistent with his anti-democratic outlook. By giving the term "proletarian" an ideological twist, Lenin was able to include in the term his own Bolsheviks, who by and large had no working-class origin but had sprung from the Russian bourgeois intelligentsia. These for Lenin were not only "proletarians" but formed in the main his "class-conscious proletarians." That is why Lenin made a decisive distinction between "the class-conscious proletarians" and "the masses." While he often adroitly manipulated the term "proletarian" for demagogic purposes, he always made the capture of political power by the class-conscious proletariat synonymous with the supremacy of an elite.

Yet Mr. Carew Hunt blandly informs us that this is all perfectly in line with Engel's statement in the preface to "Class Struggles in France" "that in a complete social transformation the masses themselves have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for body and soul. The history of the last 50 years has taught us that." The author is able to say that because he never informs us as to the real content of Bolshevik doctrine. He only misinforms us of its relation with Marxism. Because the author's proofs of most of his assertions are so constricted, he stretches his imagination to the point of rupture.

The Bolshevik seizure of power is paralleled also with Engel's statement in his article on Authority, February, 1873, that "a revolution is an act where one part of the population imposes its will on the other part by rifles, bayonets and cannon." (Selected Works, p. 578.) But in this particular instance Engels specifically cites, as an example of the armed authority of the people, the Paris Commune, which was no Leninist usurping of power by a minority but authority democratically conceived and arrived at.

Also the Communist Manifesto's statement, "The Communists are the most resolute section which pushes on all other sections," the author suggests, is the originating idea of Lenin's professional elite. Undoubtedly his pen-



chant for reading between the lines of Marxist literature has given him a bad squint.

The authority of the Communist League (1850) is cited as good Marxist paternity for Leninism. Marx then advised workers to agitate on behalf of the Democrats, who represented the German lower-middle class; and, in the event of their forming a government, to foist on them "revolutionary demands," thus weakening the power of the upper bourgeoisie and strengthening the revolutionary

potential of the workers. This political immaturity of Marx was never repeated. Afterwards, he made working-class political maturity the measure of working-class development. All the essential features of Leninism, however, were missing from the Communist League. There was no separation of intellectuals from workers, no proscribing of working-class activity, no envisaging seizure of power by a political Junta.

(To be concluded)

## JAMES MAXTON, THE BELOVED REBEL

"If it were not such a dreadful thing to say of anybody, I should say he meant well"

—The Way of All Flesh

A biography can be written in one of two ways. It may be an "objective" study, an attempt at critically assessing the man, his work and his place in history. On the other hand, it may be a personal piece—an extended obituary notice, wherein the author pays his tribute to the departed. John McNair's *James Maxton, the Beloved Rebel* (Allen and Unwin, 12s. 6d.) is unashamedly the latter: a chronicle and eulogy of a leader whose faults, if he had them, are allowed no place.

Maxton is presented as a man of deep, passionate sincerity, devoted to the welfare of the poor, earning the affection even of opponents by his integrity and his refusal to compromise. He opposed the two world wars which his Labour colleagues supported; in the first he was imprisoned, in the second he led the tiny I.L.P. group of M.P.s that constituted the permanent opposition to all war measures. Above all, Maxton is shown as a Socialist, aiming to abolish exploitation and misery, working for the unification of all interested parties towards that end.

The book is heavily—perhaps unavoidably—weighted with reference to Maxton's Scottish background: for example, the poverty of the working class seems, at any rate to this writer, to be made almost a regional affair. Nevertheless, it provides an informal, informative history of Labour politics from 1920. The growing Labour movement threw up men like Maxton, protesting against the degradation of the working class. From 1920 to 1939 there was never less than a million unemployed. Towns became derelict; children were born, grew up and married on the dole. "Ten million working men, women and children underfed, underclothed, badly housed at a time which was 'generally regarded as prosperous.'" (J. Kuczynski, *A Short History of Labour Conditions in Great Britain*).

Maxton's party, the I.L.P., supplied most of the Labour leaders of the "twenties"; of the 192 members in the first Labour Parliament, 120 belonged to the I.L.P. Describing itself—in the *New Leader* in 1923—as "the militant Socialist wing of the Labour Party," the I.L.P. pressed vigorously a "living wage policy" aimed at "a narrowing of the gulf that separates rich and poor." Mr. McNair makes much of this policy and its advocates, and thereby raises some awkward questions. It may be protested that this is a work of biography, not of political theory; but since much of the praise of Maxton rests on the policies he pursued, facts must be faced.

For the truth is that, however ardently Maxton spoke of Socialism and the abolition of poverty, he and his party had contracted for neither: the "wild men from the Clyde"

were as dangerous to the Capitalist system as a pantomime lion to its audience. Leave aside, if you like, the economic aspects—for example, that Socialism has nothing to do with wages; leave that aside, and consider merely that many of the men Maxton supported and Mr. McNair praises were avowed upholders of capitalism.

Thus, a whole chapter of the book is given to reporting Maxton's allegation of murder against the Tory Government for the malnutrition deaths of poor people's children, and his subsequent suspension from the House of Commons. But in 1924, when Labour was in office, Ramsay MacDonald—Prime Minister, a leader of the I.L.P.—told the House: "We are not going to diminish industrial capital in order to provide relief." There was no denunciation by Maxton, nor is there any reference by Mr. McNair. Again, John Wheatley is praised for his



work on housing as Minister of Health in the first Labour Cabinet. But Wheatley himself made quite clear what his position was. Introducing his housing bill in 1924, he said:

"Labour does not propose to interfere with private enterprise in the building of houses. . . . It says to the man with small capital: 'Instead of putting your private capital into a risky investment, lend it to the local authorities at 4½ per cent. Without your having any trouble at all you will get a safe return for your money. . . . The Labour Party's programme on housing is not a Socialist programme at all.'"

What is more, he repeated it a week later:

"I notice that the 'right Honourable member for Twickenham in criticizing my proposals the other day, said: 'This is real Socialism.' . . . The proposals which I am submitting are real Capitalism—an attempt to patch up in the interests of humanity, a capitalist ordered society."

Maxton's hope was that the Labour Party would become Socialist. In 1929, seeing his lack of an overall majority, he urged that it should attempt sweeping legislation on behalf of the workers; it would fail, of course, but then could turn to the electorate and ask for the mandate it would undoubtedly receive. Perhaps in that one incident is shown what Maxton really failed to perceive. All his life he had hopes in the Labour Party as the agent for emancipating the working class; he never saw that the Labour Party had never set out to that end—or, when he did see it, he hoped he was mistaken.

Maxton lacked, in fact, any clear-cut conception of Socialism, much as he talked about it. In 1928 he debated with the Socialist Party of Great Britain, and expressed his entire agreement with the case Fitzgerald put forward—adding that he appreciated also the Fabians and the Communist Party! He held that Socialism was a question of "human will and human intelligence," to be attained by any of a variety of possible means.

Indeed, the I.L.P.'s attitude to the Communist Party and to Russia comprises one of the more curious matters in the book. One might set aside Maxton's early co-operation with Gallacher, but Mr. McNair will not do so. He writes with undisguised sympathy for the Russian Revolution and the early Bolshevik Government, condemning the British Government's attitude towards it. The I.L.P. today condemns the Russian dictatorship as

strongly as everyone else, but Mr. McNair does not explain the difference. Would it be too uncharitable to suggest that the I.L.P. was "taken in" by the illusion of Russian "Socialism" and can deal with its mistakes only by ignoring them?

Maxton's lack of understanding is made the more regrettable by his undoubted sincerity. He was a fine orator, commanding respect and sympathy, but his moral indignation against injustice was never supported by analysis of the real causes of that injustice. Those who followed him were impelled by the same emotional force that drove him; "beloved rebel" is an apt and proud title, but its pleasant emotional sound is the key to Maxton's weakness.

Much has been written in recent times about the "decline" of the Labour movement. The phrase lacks accuracy, since a decline implies a height previously reached. The Labour movement gained its strength from the hopes of working people: men were sent to Parliament who spoke fervently of their opposition to capitalism, inequality and privilege. Many of them, unlike the Tories and Liberals, were from the working class itself, had experienced poverty, knew the problems. When at last they came to govern with an unassailable majority, after the war, their policies gave birth to nothing; the real truth is that they had always been barren.

The I.L.P., a negligible force today, was nothing more in its strongest days. It stood for a benevolent capitalism, its leaders for the most part unaware that capitalism contained no seeds of benevolence. Only Maxton's idealism distinguishes him from the MacDonalds and Hendersons and Snowdens; had he attained parliamentary office, he would have been no more able than they to deserve the title of "beloved rebel," or even rebel. Perhaps the most pointed comment on all that Mr. McNair's book describes is contained in two recent death notices—David Kirkwood and George Buchanan. These, with Maxton, were firebrands among the "wild men" of the 1920's. They died reconciled to capitalism: the one titled, the other with his wildness tamed by service on the National Assistance Board.

R. COSTER.

## AFTER THE CONQUEST OF POWER

We have been asked to give an interpretation of Clause 6 of our Declaration of Principles on the ground that a part of it has been taken to imply an authoritarian suppression of all opposition, actual or potential, including freedom of expression, by armed force—after the fashion of the Bolsheviks and Fascists.

This clause has already been gone into at length in our Pamphlet "The Socialist Party: Its Principals and Policy." However, we will give a brief interpretation of it in relation to the point raised.

The State is the governmental power that makes and enforces the laws and regulations of society. Since it developed it has always represented the social class that is dominating. The armed forces of this State were organised for the purpose of defending the interests and the social arrangements that suited the dominating social class.

Every rising social class has had to struggle for control of, or influence in, this State power in order to abolish or modify the existing political arrangements that hin-

dered the further development of the rising class.

In present society this holds true of the working class movement which seeks to overthrow the domination of the Capitalist class; a domination that keeps the working class in a subject position. The fact that most of the workers do not yet recognise the source of their subjection, or only vaguely do so, does not effect the question. Thus, before the workers can throw off this domination they must obtain control of the State power in order to take out of the hands of the dominating class the power that defends this domination.

Parliament is the centre of state power in modern "democracies" and the workers, who comprise the great majority of each nation, vote the representatives to these parliaments. Therefore, when the workers understand the source of their subject position and the action they must take to abolish it, they can do so by sending representatives to Parliament to take control of the State power for this purpose. By doing so they will take out of the hands



of the Capitalist class the control of the powers of government, including the armed forces.

Once the workers have obtained control of the governmental power what then? They will proceed to reorganise society on a Socialist basis. Now we come into the region of conjecture. While we hold the view that the overwhelming mass of the people will participate, or fall in line with, the process of re-organisation (in other words that, while the workers will participate in the movement, and probably individual Capitalists, the Capitalists as a whole will realize that the game is up, as they have lost the power of effective resistance) we make allowance for a theoretically possible attempt in some form of violent sabotage during the revolutionary re-organisation. The

control of the armed forces during this period will be an effective deterrent to any such violent attempt without these forces having necessarily to be used. Should a violent minority attempt to destroy Socialism they would have to be forcibly dealt with. While at full liberty to advocate a return to Capitalism, no violent minority could be allowed to obstruct the will of the majority. Hence the phrase in the 6th clause "in order that this machinery including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation." There will be no suppression of speech, opinion, or peaceful organisation.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

## NOTES BY THE WAY

### Religion in Russia.

One of the heads of the Russian Church, the Metropolitan Pitirim of Minsk, addressed a Press conference at Lambeth Palace on the position of the Church in Russia.

His figure of "over 20,000 churches" shows little change from the figure for 1945.

(*Statesmen's Year Book*, 1952, p. 1413.)

He claimed that there are eight seminaries and two academies, at which over 2,000 young men were in training for the priesthood. "He said that 85 per cent. of Russians had remained faithful to their Church."

(*Manchester Guardian*, 12 July, 1955.)

He had rather a lot to say about the funds of the Church and must have made some of his English audiences envious.

"Questioned about church finance, the Metropolitan said that it was all provided by the gifts of the faithful. Fingering a diamond-set medallion of the Virgin Mary, he added that he had several of these treasures, as well as two fine cars which had been given to him. 'By this you can judge our material position,' he said; 'it is all given by the people, who love their priests.'"

(*Manchester Guardian*, 12 July, 1955.)

The *Daily Mail* reported him as saying also that every clergyman in Russia is provided by the faithful with a car.

### The "Socialism" of the I.L.P.

The *Socialist Leader*, organ of the I.L.P., in its issue of 16 July, comes out with its proposal for the coal mines. It asks "Why not stop paying the former coalowners?" This, it thinks, would enable the Coal Board to avoid increasing the price of coal.

It is typical of the I.L.P., now as in all the years of its history, that whenever a problem of capitalism comes up, it thinks of all sorts of solutions except the one to which it is nominally committed—Socialism. It is also typical of the I.L.P. when it makes its proposals to help the capitalists run capitalism that it thinks it knows better than they do how it should be done. Past experience gives no support even to this. When the two Labour Governments, of 1924 and 1929, were running capitalism, composed as they were predominantly of members of the I.L.P., there was nothing in their record to encourage such belief.

It is also characteristic of the naive attitude of the I.L.P. that its article on the coal situation should discover, as if it is a matter for surprise, that the Government has

not put up coal prices in the interests of the mineworkers. Why should it and if it accepted the new I.L.P. proposal the same would be true. When will the I.L.P. wake up to the fact that nationalisation is State capitalism and is not in the interest of the workers, and has nothing to do with Socialism?

### How High are Co-operative Society Profits?

The co-operators insist that their dividends on purchases are profit, not a reduction of prices. They do so on principle, but they also have a particular reason in that some manufacturers of proprietary articles will only supply them to Co-operative societies on condition that no dividend is paid to purchasers in respect of these articles. *Co-operative News* (9th July) writes:—"The manufacturers regard the payment of dividend as a cut in price, which is pure nonsense."

But apart from this, some Co-operators are keen to show that their stores make just as large profits as do private Capitalists. *Co-operative News* (14th May, 1955), published some facts about Co-operative profits. The writer showed that the Co-operative Wholesale Society last year paid out £6,174,067 as dividend; which on a capital of £27,431,064, is a rate of 25.25 per cent. He compared this with the Imperial Chemical's distribution of a 10 per cent. dividend (but did not deal with the further profit, not distributed, which would have enabled I.C.I. to pay 30 per cent).

The writer showed, too, that on the retail co-operatives' capital of £220,500,000 their dividend of £38,000,000 is 15.2 per cent. It looks like good Capitalist business.

### Can the Workers Understand?

In the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* of 50 years ago (August, 1905) was an article with quite up-to-date applications. It derided a furious agitation then being carried on by Labourites as being for a farcical object of no value to the workers. It went on to examine the reason given by Labourites who claimed to want Socialism, for wasting time on such trivial issues. Their explanation was one we still hear. They said that, desirable as Socialism is, you cannot expect the ordinary worker to understand it but must gain his interest by putting to him other simple immediate issues that he can understand, and thus lead him on step by step.

The writer of the article in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*

argued that the case for Socialism was in truth simpler than the tortuous case for reforms and that these side-tracking proposals could only serve to confuse the workers and take them away from the real issue, that of establishing Socialism.

From 1905 we may jump 50 years to the recent Blackpool Conference of the Transport Workers Union. On 12th July, 1955, the delegates accepted the lead of their new general secretary Mr. A. E. Tiffin, and rejected resolutions for widespread new nationalization measures. Mr. Tiffin reminded delegates that the Labour Party had just fought an election on Nationalization and lost it, and the reason was, he said, that the workers don't understand what Nationalization is all about.

"... We have to face the fact that nationalization at the present time has not yet been sufficiently explained to our fellow citizens as to convince them that further nationalization is in the interests of the whole nation."

"... even our own people in the industries we nationalized do not really understand what was the basic motive for nationalizing them." (*Times*, 13 July, 1955.)

The leaders also did not understand what they were doing and had, said Mr. Tiffin, relied on trial and error methods. "We should know precisely what we are going to do before we engaged on more Nationalization and not leave it to trial and error." (*Daily Herald*, 13 July.)

So after half a century they can't understand their own programme though Nationalization was, 50 years ago,

## FIVE MINUTES ON SOCIALISM—III

THE British people have once again voted a Tory Government into office—not that it matters which of the parties succeeded since none of them have the desire to end Capitalism.

Though in the main the problems were the same as at every other election and the suggested reforms identical, perhaps the question of peace and war has reached out to more people than ever before. What then is the attitude of various political parties and religious organizations, who support the present system, to this vital issue? and what do Socialists think?

The various parties have, despite minor differences of "technique" staked their faith in the manufacture and use of armaments (including the "bomb") as being necessary to maintain peace. The only possible way of refusing a mandate to these parties was to withhold the vote—Socialists did this.

The Churches' attitude has always been interesting. Cardinal Bourne, R/C Archbishop of Westminster, once stated: "War cannot be a sin since God himself has actually commanded war on many occasions and aided his people to victory." Quite recently the Archbishop of York said that the best way to peace was by the hydrogen bomb, a statement which the Bishop of Swansea deplored though not stating his own attitude towards other forms of warfare.

A monastic group—the Society of Brothers, some time ago wrote to the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* agreeing that "the position of the Pacifist is unreal and futile in face of the forces of Capitalism." They were even generous enough to agree with Socialists that the cause of war was capitalist

just one of the side-tracking, time-wasting reforms advocated by Labourites on the plea that it was more easily understood than Socialism and would help us on the way.

Now let us return to another of these useless agitations, the one dealt with in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* of August, 1905. The article in question pointed out that this agitation had already been going on for 25 years and had never mattered. What, then was it? It was the demand for the abolition of the House of Lords! Three years later at the 1908 conference of the Labour Party a resolution demanding its abolition was passed unanimously (Report, p. 68) and this demand was reaffirmed at later conferences.

And here is an extract from a speech about it:—

"The first thing the Tories should understand is that if they tinker about any further with the British Constitution they must be informed that if we get a majority we will put an end to the House of Lords. . . ."

Who made this speech and when? It was none other than the ebullient clown of the Labour circus, in one of his profound, statesmanlike moods, Mr. Aneurin Bevan. (*Times*, 24 May, 1955.) And it was made in 1955 after three Labour Governments had been in office and done nothing about it; showing, incidentally, how little it matters even for their purposes. All they have ever done is to fill a lot of the plush seats of the House of Lords with superannuated Labour M.P.s.

H.

competition between nations.

Anti-militarism does not, of course, denote an acceptance of Socialism. Pacifists, Church Groups and Peace Committees may sigh, strive and agitate, but whilst they ignore the nature of the system that nurtures war then they are dreamers—a thing they accuse Socialists of being.

The Soviet Union, through Litvinoff, stated at the Geneva Conference: "... under Capitalism it is impossible to remove the causes of war," which sounds strange compared with Russia's present cry of "peaceful Co-existence."

Whilst it is plain that leaders, both religious and political, work consciously or otherwise for the preservation of Capitalism, it is true that many people are sincere in their desire for peace and concord. *The tragedy is that peace is impossible whilst Capitalism remains.* War whether on the industrial field or the battlefield is the very skin of the Capitalist body. Emotionalism or any expediency evolved by any political party cannot do the task which is to be the historic role of Socialism.

Socialists have a definite attitude to war. In 1914 the S.P.G.B. issued a Manifesto to the warring powers: a message that we repeated in 1939 ending with the words: "Having no quarrel with the workers of any country we extend to our fellow workers of all lands the expression of our good will . . . and pledge ourselves to work for the overthrow of capitalism and the triumph of Socialism."

To this end, Socialists urge the workers to educate themselves as the first step to their emancipation.

W. BRAIN.



## The Revolutionary Proposition

**M**ODERN Society is made up of the working class, the great majority, who produce but do not own and a small section (barely 10%) who own but do not produce. For the protection of the latter's wealth and privileges against the have-nots at home and against covetous and greedy competitors abroad, the possessing class needs coercive machinery, police and armed forces, and so it is that every technical improvement in the tools of production finds its primary application to arms production. The discovery of nuclear energy is only the most recent case in point, though unique in so far as it has "revolutionized the entire foundation of human affairs and placed mankind in a situation both measureless and laden with doom." Churchill, who spoke these words, "had no solution for permanent peace between the nations, although," he said, "we pray for it." He also said that "it would be folly to suppose hydrogen-weapons would not be used in case of war." Apparently Churchill knows his men and also his God.

Now, there is a solution, and if it is not for avowed defenders of capitalism like Churchill and the other avowed anti-Socialists to advocate that solution, honesty and consistency would require of those calling themselves Socialists to urge that solution especially since it is the only way out of the present appalling dilemma.

Though an exposé of the genuine Socialist case, i.e., the abolition of Capitalism, lock, stock and barrel, in other words: a fundamental change in the constitution of present-day society, from production for profit to production of the means of life for use, on the principle: From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs, though such a proposition would fall on deaf ears in Parliament and be promptly derided as a Utopia.

Yet, though "we are all Socialists now," there has not been to the writer's knowledge, any reference to Socialism as the only solution of society's problems from any "Socialist" quarters. One is bound to conclude that actually all of them—save that of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the companion parties overseas—look upon the conversion of the means of wealth production and distribution from private or State control to COMMON OWNERSHIP and democratic control by the people as a whole, as a Utopia, just as do the Capitalists themselves. There is, for example, Attlee, saying in the debate on Defence: "There is sometimes a need for something more dramatic if a H-bomb-war and the destruction of civilisation was to be avoided. He believed that it was felt by the rulers of Russia, as well as by the President of the U.S.A., and by the rulers of France, but somehow the thing did not get moving. We were looking for an initiative." Just as 40 years ago, at the outbreak of World-War I, another pseudo-Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party, confessed officially that they had been taken by a storm and "were waiting for a lead." Attlee said he had had talks with Malenkov, for he was "a very important factor." (That this "important factor" became only a few days afterwards a mere factotum, shows the political foresight and intellect of these Western Capitalist factotums). What a Socialist indeed, who received the praise of H.M. Government for getting the atom-bomb for Britain and who is now "looking for an initiative" to avoid the destruction of civilisation—as if he had never heard of Socialism!

Others of Attlee's ilk talked about the "tremendous catastrophe of another war, and that a superior ideology to put over to the people had to be found." Any ideo-

logy will apparently do for these Socialists, as long as it does not end Capitalism and the good old "transition-period" on which these leaders and job-hunters prosper and thrive. (To be concluded next month) R.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, August 1905)

### The Curse of National Prestige.

What the Socialist has to realise clearly is that the interests of his fellow workers in other lands are nearer to his than are those of his master in his own country. The bonds which bind worker with worker, irrespective of nationality, are those of class solidarity. The meeting of Japanese and Russian on the platform of the International Socialist Congress at Amsterdam in August last was but symbolical of this solidarity. From the Capitalist-class of every country the worker is divided by a gulf of class antagonism which can be bridged only by the absorption of the Capitalist-class in the working-class, the result of the coming Social Revolution.

When the Capitalist-class fully realises that they can no longer depend upon the working-class, when they find that the worker has at last come to understand his class position, and that he has no reason for fighting in his master's interests against those with whom he has no personal quarrel, he, the Capitalist, will see that it is impossible to appeal to national prestige, to patriotism, to the spirit of "our imperial race" and all the rest of the phrases used of old, and then it will be impossible to make war in so light a spirit, or to raise questions likely to create a tension between the ruling classes of different nations.

It is for the worker to see that his position demands that he should fight only for his class emancipation, and that nothing, internal reform or national strife, should draw him away from his determination to fight for the realisation of the Socialist regime.

Workers of all countries unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to win.

**MAUREEN**—continued from page 119

Maureen had looked hastily round. Girls can still pick and choose. She is now working in a dressmaking factory. At least the colours of the dresses are different.

Funnily enough, I happen to know one of the directors of Maureen's first firm in a purely private capacity.

"Pity about that Maureen kid!" I said. "Oh! I dunno! was the reply. She didn't do so badly. Three weeks is about the average. We only get one in 20 to stay longer. Of course, it's repetition work, but they can get used to it."

There you are! That's the trouble with the youth to-day. When I think of all the time spent at interviews. The Youth Employment Officer, the Headmaster, the Teacher. The letters and references, and now she's gone to a dress factory where they don't ask for references at all.

It makes you sick! Why, for all the good it's done we might just as well have told her to go where she liked at first.

I nearly felt like telling her so when I saw her last week if she hadn't told me first that she'd just been after a new job.

It appears that at the dress factory she had to sit at a machine sewing buttonholes. All day long, buttonholes, hundreds of buttonholes—thousands of 'em.

"CYNICUS."

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## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

## BOREHAM WOOD

Will members and sympathisers willing to cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood contact:

I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,  
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## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL.**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP.**—Secretary: R. Smith, 1, Littlejohn Street, Dundee. Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 10th and 24th Aug, 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**OLDHAM.**—Group meets Wednesdays 6th and 20th July, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

**RUGBY.**—Group meets alternate Mondays 8th and 22nd Aug, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

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**WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.**

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY.** Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., meets at 7.30 p.m. No meetings in August. Next September 1st.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT.** The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON.** Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

**CROYDON** meets each month, 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

**EALING** meets every Friday (Except Aug. 19th, 26th and Sep. 2nd,) at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM AND CHELSEA.** Correspondence and enquiries to Jon Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3. Outdoor meetings, Gloucester Road, Wednesday evenings, 8 p.m. and Earls Court, Friday evenings, 8 p.m.

**GLASGOW (City)** meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halla, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW (Kelvingrove)** meets alternate Mondays, 8th and 22nd Aug, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to I. MacDougall, 26, Arnprior Quadrant, Castlemilk.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** Enquiries to A. D. Oliver, 13, Penywern Road, Earls Court, S.W.3. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday, in month at 1, Broadhurst Gardens (nr John Barnes).

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. Secretary: 54, Ashdale House, Seven Sisters Road, N.4.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

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**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 9th and 23rd Aug. George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

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**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

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**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Outdoor meetings Sunday 8 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsey, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 613 Vol. 51 September, 1955

GERMAN SOCIAL  
DEMOCRACY TODAY

MARXISM:  
PAST AND PRESENT

TALKS AT THE SUMMIT

HOW KEIR HARDIE GOT  
INTO PARLIAMENT

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4

## The Automatic Factory— FANTASY AND FACT

AUTOMATION AND ITS SISTER magic word electronics have inspired extremes of panic on the one side and rapture on the other, both flowing, however, from lack of understanding of what is involved. One man's nightmare is another man's dream of bliss. On one extreme it spells a world without jobs, all the workers being unemployed; on the other a world of leisure and abundance without anyone having to work.

There is no evidence to support either fantasy. Automation is an extension of the familiar mechanization of production, a series of complex processes operated and controlled by the machine itself using electronic controls which help "to reduce the amount of routine brainwork in factories, just as mechanical handling on the production line displaces routine labour." (For those interested in definitions the correspondent of the "Times Radio and Television Supplement," 19 August,

a programme of  
**Documentary Films**  
will be shown at

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every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.  
commencing 2nd October  
details on an inside page

1955, whose words are quoted above, defines an electronic device as one which depends "at some stage upon the passage of current through a vacuum, gas or semi-conductor").

Much that is being written about automation and its likely consequences is confused in the minds of writers and readers alike. Because it has been possible to operate certain factory processes automatically and with very few workers (as is already true of modern oil refineries) it has been rashly assumed that automation is capable of general application and that it will bring great saving of labour and cost. In general the confusion is caused by failure to separate technical problems and solutions from economic and social ones.

It is assumed that because a mechanical and electronic apparatus is technically possible for the engineers it is commercially acceptable to business men and will be adopted by them. While governments may go to almost unlimited expense to apply a technical invention to armaments, business men have to look at cost, which



usually means that they look at saving of labour. (There are exceptions to this. As Marx pointed out, if wages fall below the value of labour power, employers, being interested in saving cost not saving labour, have no incentive to go to the expense of introducing a labour saving machine).

The extent to which automation will be commercially practicable and the speed with which it will be introduced are then largely governed by considerations of cost and profit.

Factory owners who are invited to spend large sums re-equipping plant for automatic methods want to know whether it will cheapen production; it is not sufficient to tell them that technically the job can be done. But so far little attention has been given to providing the kind of information needed. The *Manchester Guardian* (20/6/55) criticised the recent Margate Conference on Automation for that reason:—"A more serious deficiency has been that, with one limited exception, there has been no attempt to assess the economic cost and advantage of automatic processes, for the answers to such questions will determine the rate at which automation can be introduced."

The "experts" generally take the view that the development of automation in Britain will not be extensive, and will not be rapid even where technically it is possible. A contributory cause of delay is that the factory owner, under present boom conditions, has first to overcome the difficulty of getting the equipment and then of getting workers to instal and operate it; the electronics industry is itself hampered by "shortage of technical manpower." (*Times Supplement*).

A pointer in the slowness of industrial change in this country is given by the telephone service; the first automatic exchange was opened more than 40 years ago but still a quarter of the exchanges have not been converted to automatic working. This is one of the industries in which the introduction of automatic working was expected by an earlier generation to accomplish a speedy and revolutionary change, but the overall saving of manpower has proved to be quite small. And such is the amount and cost of the equipment that several hundred thousand would-be subscribers still cannot be provided and have to wait in the queue.

The most serious and misleading error in the approach to the problem of automation is that of assuming, without examining the facts to find out, an enormous increase of productivity. To be told that a machine has been produced which eliminates hand labour from the "end processes" in cigarette making, or coal cutting or telephoning or any other operation, does not tell us anything at all about labour-saving and productivity; all it tells us is that labour has been eliminated from the end process, and that labour has been necessarily increased in the preceding processes of making driving and maintaining the machines. To the extent that, for the same total output, the labour saved at one end exceeds the increase of labour at the other, there will be labour saving and increased productivity. Although from time to time a particular industry may make a big jump in productivity when new machines and methods are introduced, the average increase over a period of years for all industries is of very modest amount. In Britain during this century it has averaged between one per cent. and two per cent. a year.

The general picture of British industry since back in the nineteenth century is of a transference of workers from end-process work (miners, landworkers, and hand workers generally) to the engineering and allied trades which have grown enormously and are growing still. In effect many tens of thousands of land workers, mine workers, cigarette makers, etc., are now employed in the engineering industries making machines for those trades.

If it is said that automation will be markedly different from the older mechanization processes and will really increase overall productivity at an unprecedented rate, past experience calls for caution: it should be remembered that similar claims have been made endlessly and falsely throughout the past century, and that no-one has yet produced evidence that will support the claim that automation can rapidly increase productivity in industry as a whole. (An influential committee is reported now to have been set up in U.S.A. to study the effects of automation on costs).

The illusion that industrial invention and mechanisation have in the past enormously increased productivity is still very widespread. A Labour Party publication, "Towards World Plenty" (July, 1952) informs its readers that the application of scientific knowledge and the revolution in the methods of production in Western Europe North America and Australasia "has raised productivity a thousandfold." This may be described as somewhat more than a slight exaggeration. Productivity of British workers in the past 150 years has not risen a thousand-fold or a hundred-fold or even ten-fold. (In passing one wonders why, if the Labour Party believed that productivity of British workers had already gone up by a thousand-fold, the Labour Government was badgering them in 1945-1951 to increase productivity by the trivial addition of 10 per cent. "to save the country").

We have too, a simple test of current announcements of new processes. If they really brought about a dramatic saving of labour this would show itself in a fall of prices even against the general monetary factors that are tending to raise price levels. But though we read of six men who "can produce the electricity for a town" and four men who "can do the major job" in the production of a third of Britain's crude oil (*Daily Mirror* 29/6/55) and twenty-one gas workers who do the work of 350 (*Daily Sketch* 37/6/55), we read almost simultaneously that electricity, oil and gas, are going up in price! Doubtless the innovations in these industries have produced some small overall saving of labour so that there is a small increase of productivity, but not enough to offset other factors leading to higher prices. In the coal industry all the mechanisation has failed to counteract the effect of the coal having to be mined from greater depths, so that average coal output per man per year is lower than it was 70 years ago and there is little prospect of it getting back to the former level of output.

And the new fuel source to replace the expected diminution of supplies of coal and oil, atomic energy, only slightly changes the situation since the labour required for its production and application is expected at best to be only moderately below that required for the old fuels, and that not at once but ten years ahead. At the Geneva conference on nuclear power in August

"the papers presented . . . here show that we must not expect the cost of nuclear power to be cheaper in the next decade than power from coal." (*Times* 20/8/55).

The *Times* goes on to quote Sir John Cockcroft, Director of the Atomic Research Establishment at Harwell, as saying that "there is good reason to believe that in the second decade the cost of nuclear power will fall below that of power from coal and oil."

It would be wise on past form to accept even this estimate with caution, since it may turn out to be no more accurate than the "expert" forecasts of a few years ago of expected increased productivity and cheapening of coal.

But if the problems of automation have been misunderstood by many observers that does not mean that there are no problems for the workers to face. To an economist, remote from the factory and the farm, it is easy to talk of farmworkers becoming engineers, miners going to work in factories, and clerks becoming bus-workers, but the transference may be impossible, or, where possible, very difficult and costly to the worker. Lord Halsbury, speaking at the Margate conference on Automation, dealt with this:—

"A more serious problem, he thought, would concern those workpeople who could not be fitted into the future pattern of industry with its demand for high skill. A farm labourer can be trained as an engineer if he is still young, but can this be done after he is 40?"

(*Manchester Guardian* 18/6/55).

His two further remarks, that the farm labourer's children will become trained as engineers, and that automation will not spread quickly, may or may not bring comfort to the man whose job is threatened.

What other bearing does automation have on unemployment? As already mentioned there will be the closing down of certain jobs, and unemployment for the workers who held them. If they can find other work that they can do, in the place where they live or where they can get accommodation, the loss of employment may not last

long under present conditions, but they may have to take a lower wage because their old skill may not have much use in another job.

But the mass unemployment of a crisis is a different proposition. This is caused by widespread dislocation and failure of markets and when it occurs it engulfs all industries, whatever their degree of mechanization; mechanization itself will not be the direct cause of a crisis though its development can be a contributory factor in helping to create dislocation of markets. Crises occurred in earlier days when machine production was in its infancy, and the problem of their cause is not much altered by automation.

Which brings us to the most important aspect of all as far as the workers are concerned. Automation will not be applied for the benefit of the workers but for the benefit of the Capitalists. They own the old means of production and will own the new ones. If anyone benefits from its introduction it will be the owners not the workers, except to the extent that some of the latter can struggle successfully to make it so. And the owners will as usual find plenty of university professors and technical experts to prove the inevitability of whatever harmful effects automation has on the workers. We may fittingly conclude with an observation made by one of the experts on automation, Professor Norbert Wiener, of Massachusetts:

"The ordinary worker . . . is just a source of low-level judgment. He can and will be replaced by machines." (*Manchester Guardian Review of Industry* 1952, p. 72).

It is up to the workers to exercise their capacity themselves and in their own interest by replacing Capitalism by Socialism—they can expect no salvation from the owners of industry, the politicians and parties that administer Capitalism, or from the technicians and scientists who preside over the new techniques of production.

H.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," September, 1905)

MR. KEIR HARDIE'S ELECTION ADDRESS  
MERTHYR BOROUGH PARLIAMENTARY  
ELECTION, 1900

To the Electors

Gentlemen,

It is with pleasure that I accept the hearty invitation of the

TRADE UNIONISTS OF THE MERTHYR  
BOROUGH

to come forward in the Labour interest as a Candidate for the representation of the constituency in the House of Commons.

The confidence and friendship shown by this invitation is an honour which I value as being far above riches.

WE ARE NO STRANGERS TO ONE ANOTHER.

I was among you endeavouring to cheer, encourage and strengthen you in the dark days of your recent great Industrial struggle. Not many years ago, when during the Hauliers' Strike, the Government sent soldiers into your District, it was MY VOICE THAT PROTESTED against this in Parliament, when others upon whom you had more claims were silent.

My Programme is the Programme of Labour. My

Cause is Labour's Cause—the cause of Humanity,—the Cause of God.

For twenty-four years I have been before my fellow-men as a Trade-Union Official and a Political Leader.

MY RECORD FOR THESE YEARS is the best pledge I can give of what my future course of action will be. Whether in Parliament, or out of it, I always have been, and always shall be found on the side of the Workers. I know everything that is to be known about the life and work of a Miner.

Born and reared in a collier's cottage, and afterwards working for FOURTEEN YEARS IN THE PIT, I know only too well what such a life means, and I am not willing that any human being should continue in the life, without further essential reforms.

I am a Democrat in Politics, and a Socialist in Economics. I first learned my Socialism in the New Testament, where I still find my chief inspiration.

Our claim for one representative is moderate and reasonable enough. In a constituency where we are in an overwhelming majority, we ask but for half the representation. Workers! in being true to me, you will be TRUE TO YOURSELVES! Let us, then, work hard for



a great Labour Victory at the Polls on Tuesday next.  
I am, Gentlemen, respectfully yours,

J. KEIR HARDIE,

Lochnorris, Cumnock, Scotland. September, 1900.

It will be observed that Keir Hardie made a point of reminding the electors that he was claiming only half the representation of Merthyr. Merthyr was a two-member constituency, and hitherto it had been represented by two Liberals. D. A. Thomas and Pritchard Morgan. The I.L.P.'s electoral tactic was to put up only one Labour candidate and to attack only one of the Liberal candidates and not the other, hoping in this way to get Keir Hardie returned along with one Liberal and with Liberal votes. They therefore attacked Pritchard Morgan, who supported the Boer War, but supported D. A. Thomas who opposed it. The tactic was successful, the votes being:—

D. A. Thomas	8,508
J. Keir Hardie	5,745
W. Pritchard Morgan	4,004

Commenting on this, William Stewart, in his *Life of Keir Hardie* ("J. Keir Hardie," I.L.P. Publication Department, 1925, Page 175) wrote:—

"Their energies were directed wholly against Pritchard

Morgan, characterised by Hardie as a 'dangerous type.' They did not expect, and, indeed did not desire, to defeat D. A. Thomas, the senior member (known in later years as Lord Rhondda), who was one of the few Liberals definitely opposed to the war. . . ." (p. 170).

Stewart says that Hardie had suggested for the general election, that "all the anti-Imperialist forces should work in unison with each other," and among those he particularly mentioned were "some Socialists like Dr. Clark and Lloyd George."

Even Stewart found it difficult to stomach the description of Lloyd George as a Socialist:—

"The latter name classified as Socialist, sounds strange today, but was certainly justified by some of the Welsh politician's utterances publicly and privately on social questions at the time."

It is characteristic of the kind of opportunist tactics followed by Keir Hardie and the I.L.P. that before many years had passed they were discovering that the "good" Liberals they had supported in 1900 were just as odious as the "bad" Liberals they had opposed. They supported Lloyd George and D. A. Thomas in 1900 for being anti-imperialistic and in 1914 were opposing them for supporting an 'Imperialist war.'

Ed. COMM.

## ENGLISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES (Concluded)

WHILE the organisations we have been discussing were struggling for recognition they were joined by an entirely different stream.

Old trade union leaders like Thomas Burt and Alexander Macdonald had been elected to Parliament, in theory to represent labour's point of view; in fact they were little more than supporters of the Liberal Party who used them as decoys. In areas where there was considerable dissatisfaction with existing conditions the Liberals backed these "working men" candidates; when elected the latter fell in line with Liberal policies. The organisation of the unskilled workers and those outside the established unions during the eighties and nineties thrust a fresh and awkward element into the political arena. This new unionism, based upon the most depressed sections of the workers, was inclined to shed constitutional illusions relating to industrial action, and the strike weapon came to the front again as a means to enforce the workers demands for amelioration of their conditions. Workers who were prominent in this new movement attempted to induce the Trade Union Congress to take more vigorous political action, but their efforts did not meet with much success at first; a few resolutions were carried but the domination of the old leaders was still strong enough to prevent any action being taken on them. The battle between the reactionary leaders and those imbued with the more radical ideas of the new working class political parties became stronger and a violent struggle took place at the 1889 Dundee Trade Union Congress in which the militant group, headed by Keir Hardie, was again defeated.

In the meantime Thorne, Tillet, Mann and Burns, had been busy organising the gas workers and dockers and obtaining the concession of an eight hours day for the gas workers without having to resort to a strike. A few months later the London dock workers struck and were successful in gaining their demands. These successes

gave an impetus to trade unionism and also raised the prestige of the new trade union leaders.

At the 1892 Trade Union Congress the efforts of the militant section were rewarded by the carrying of a resolution calling upon the parliamentary committee to report to the next Congress on the question of independent labour representation. At the same Congress a resolution sponsored by the Social Democratic Federation that support should only be given to Socialist candidates was lost by a comparatively small margin. The following year the Congress decided to set up a parliamentary fund, and to give support only to those candidates who advocated "the collective ownership and control of the means of production, distribution and exchange," but an amendment by Keir Hardie on complete political independence was lost. That the majority of the delegates who voted for the resolution had little idea of its implications must be obvious; in all probability the vigour of the militant section and lack of faith in the old methods swept them away. Keir Hardie, one of the leading militants, was secretary of the Ayrshire miners union and had been elected to Parliament in 1892 as an Independent. He was opposed to Marxian historical and economic theories, holding the view that Socialist revolutions had been occurring throughout history since the disintegration of tribal Communism. To him "Socialism, like every other problem of life, is at bottom a question of ethics and morals." ("From Serfdom to Socialism" 1907, page 35.). His idea of the road to Socialism he explains as follows:

"In like manner it is conceivable that the transference of industries from private hands to the State will be a gradual and peaceful process. Already, in fact, the process has advanced to a considerable stage. The property held and worked and controlled by municipalities already exceeds £500,000,000 sterling in value, and is being added to yearly. This process has but to continue long enough to ensure that every industry will pass under public control, and thus that every industry will become an accomplished fact, by a

gradual process of easy transition."—(p. 27).  
By 'State Socialism' Hardie meant that Nationalisation and Municipalisation with which we have become familiar, under which the Capitalists as a class own collectively, living upon the interest they draw from their bondholding.

The idea of building up an independent working class party on a large scale was now in the air. At the instigation of the progressive groups a conference was held at Bradford in 1893 representing all kinds of labour groups, including the Social Democratic Federation and the Fabian Society. The Socialist League had fallen to pieces in 1890 when it turned Anarchist and Morris, Eleanor Marx, Lessner, Bax and Aveling had left it and returned to the S.D.F. At the Bradford Conference the Independent Labour Party was formed and rapidly absorbed the provincial groups of Fabians. The Social Democratic Federation affiliated to it for a few months and then left. One of those who took part in forming it was Robert Blatchford, who founded the *Clarion* as a weekly periodical in 1891 and had written a book "Merrie England," published in 1893, that had a very wide circulation and was a popular propagandist booklet for many years; its appealing style was mainly responsible for this.

The Independent Labour Party soon made headway displacing the Social Democratic Federation in popularity.

Frederick Lessner and other members of the latter party joined it, as also did Ramsay Macdonald and members of the Fabian Society. It had for its object "To secure the collective ownership of all the means of production, distribution and exchange," and its programme was made up of the principal reforms that figured in the programmes of the older parties including "Taxation to extinction of unearned incomes," "Remunerative work for unemployed," and "Substitution of arbitration for war and the consequent disarmament of the nation." The Fabian element was, and remained until recent years, the prevailing influence in the Independent Labour Party. Keir Hardie became the President and Tom Mann the General Secretary of the new party.

The further development of the Independent Labour Party was merged in the development of the Labour Party. The majority of the early Labour M.P.'s were members of it. Although it still lingers on the 1914-1918 war Coalition Government, the rise of the Communist Party and Labour Government, practically killed the Independent Labour Party as well as the Socialist Democratic Party. Born in confusion, tied up with reformist policies and supporting all that they thought was "progressive" they finally sank in the morass of "practical politics."

GILMAC.

## TALKS AT THE SUMMIT

THE snows of the Cold War are melting. The Soviet Premier, Bulganin, and the Communist Party leader, Krushchev, are to visit Britain next spring. They will be feted by the Queen. Even the *Daily Mail* welcomes the visit—with some reservations.

During the war the Russians were our friends, our "gallant allies," our "comrades in arms." But since 1945 they have become the villains of the piece. They have become our potential enemies. Whilst our old enemies the Italians, the Japanese and the Germans (the Western Germans, of course!) are now our friends, our allies in a possible future war. But now, since the Geneva "Talks at the Summit" the Russians—for how long we know not—are almost our friends again; or at least our politicians have "agreed" to differ with the Soviet rulers.

To most people, who think that all these differences and antagonisms are due to differences of systems or ideologies—to "Communism" or "Fascism"—these changes are quite bewildering.

One day the Russians are nice friendly folk, and the Germans are wicked war-mongers; the next the Germans are peace-lovers and the Russians are all war-mongers. But to Socialists these so-called changes are not so bewildering. We don't fall for all this propaganda. To us Russians are not all "bad" one day and "good" the next. We know that the reason why the rulers of Russia, America, or Britain fall out is not any so-called difference of ideologies, of Democracy, or Communism; or differences of social systems or ways of life. For we know that their social systems are not basically different; that American "free enterprise" is not fundamentally different from Soviet "Communism." We know that in Britain, America—and the U.S.S.R. the same problems exist; we know that the workers of these lands are poor, that they live insecure lives, whilst their employers are rich; we know that in the Soviet Union, as Stalin admitted just before he died, the

ruling class is being forced more and more to look for markets for its goods—outside its own frontiers. We know that the Soviet leaders are as much concerned with protecting their property interests as are the Americans or British. That is why we are not surprised at the antagonisms, the Cold War, the changing alliances, the "Talks at the Summit," and the temporary patching-up of differences.

But if, at the moment, the snows are melting, and our political leaders tell us that there "ain't gonna be a war," we know that this is only temporary; that it cannot last; a breathing space for new groupings. Because we know that war, preparations for war and the like, are inseparable from our present world-wide, property-based, production—for profit society.

Bulganin and Krushchev can come to Britain, Sir Anthony Eden can go to Russia—and Nehru can continue his Cook's Tour round the world, but whilst the people of the world are divided up into national groups, working for bosses whose primary concern is profit and exporting on the world markets, these antagonisms will continue. War will always be a possibility—with or without H-bombs.

Of course, we don't have to put up with the present state of affairs, with the present system of society. We could change it, if we wanted to.

PETER E. NEWELL.

### AUTUMN DELEGATE MEETING

at

DENISON HOUSE, VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD

(nr. Victoria Stn.)

on Saturday and Sunday, October 8th and 9th

Commencing each day at 11 a.m.



# MARXISM: PAST AND PRESENT

("R. N. Carew Hunt" Published by Geoffrey Bles)

(Concluded)

NOTHING more crucially establishes contrast between Marx and Lenin than their views on the nature and function of class-consciousness. Marx saw it as a development of class-awareness of the true position in a system based on antagonistic productive relations. Lenin viewed it as the intellectual prerogative of a political intelligentsia. Marx and Engels never tired of proclaiming that the emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself. -Lenin never tired of denying it. Marx and Engels came to hold that long and patient work was necessary to fit the workers for the task of social transformation. Lenin lived in the hectic expectation of "imminent revolution" and "the psychological moment."

Lenin, like many "intellectuals" and certainly all dictators, had a naively sublime faith in the powers of leadership. It was the Bolsheviks, in fact, who classically taught the "leader principle" which later produced star pupils like Mussolini and Hitler. While Lenin in his more expansive moods spoke of the masses being the historic instrument for the achieving of Socialism, he never relaxed his iron belief that only an elite could provide the intellectual and organizational means for its accomplishment. To the workers he never conceded more than a trade-union consciousness as the upper limit of their mental development. "The mass," he contended, "have no independent movement of their own." (Collected Works, Vol. IV, Part III pp. 222 and 235.) He also said: "Left to themselves, the masses become enslaved to bourgeois ideology."

Marx and Engels saw the working class as the representatives of a new and larger aspect of mankind. Lenin regarded them as political raw material which the Bolsheviks would work up into the finished article. Docile acceptance of Bolshevik plans Lenin taught as the cardinal virtue for the workers. When they demurred, the Kronstadt incident, among others, was a reminder that Bolshevik authority was not something to be lightly disregarded. "Lenin knows best" was the phrase he wanted to hear lisped most from the lips of the infant Russian working class.

Not even so accomplished a literary ventriloquist as Mr. Carew Hunt can make Lenin a convincing mouthpiece of Marxism. Actually he was a mouthpiece, but a mouthpiece of certain social forces in Russia making for a bourgeois revolution. Politically Lenin was not a Marxist but a Jacobin revolution-monger. Not unjustly did a contemporary dub him "the Russian Marat." It is not surprising, then, that he so earnestly studied "the Jacobinic dictatorship" of the great "French bourgeois revolution" in order to discover techniques for his own. That he veiled his Jacobinic pretensions with Marxist phraseology has deceived shrewder observers than Mr. Carew Hunt.

Essentially Lenin's dictatorship theory was an inflexible belief in the dictatorship of a party or a State. In

spite of his dialectical pose, this constituted an absolute political principle applicable at all times and all phases of economic development. This is in flagrant contrast to the principles of the *Communist Manifesto*, which states: "the practical application of the principles will depend everywhere and at all times on existing historical conditions." This political premise of Lenin is still enshrined in Communist doctrine, for we are asked to believe that everywhere Russian domination extends "Socialism" has come into existence.

Little wonder that Lenin declared: "Majority rule is a constitutional myth." (Constitutional Illusions," Aug. 1917, Collected Works, VOL. XXI, Book I.) At the first All-Russian Soviet Congress, where his party was but a fraction, he announced their readiness to take over immediately. He added: "Maybe we shall hold power a few weeks and then die at the barricades"—a whimsical notion, for Lenin, intended to be no martyr *a la* Thomas Muenzer. Power at all costs was writ large in Bolshevik belief.

Many, out of piety to Lenin, believe he forsook Marxism when he thought the end of the first world war would see the end of capitalism and that a Socialist, not a bourgeois, revolution, would be the order of the day. But such a view was always implicit in Lenin's political theory, as we have seen, even if at times it conflicted with assumptions derived from Marx's economic doctrines. In line with his Jacobinic assumptions, he had always held that it was possible to seize power during the course of a bourgeois revolution in Russia and by holding it control its corresponding economic phase and "steer" it in a Socialist direction. Even as far back as 1908 he said: "The victory of the bourgeois revolution will as a victory for the bourgeoisie be impossible." (Collected Works, Vol. XII, p. 252. Quoted from "Bolshevism." R. Spengler, International Review Publishers.)

It might also seem that when Lenin identified State Capitalism with Socialism he sought to hide from himself the cruel historic truth of the limits of his own revolution. Yet again this identification was always implicit in the views he held as to the role his party would play in the Russian scene, culminating in a bourgeois revolution. When he said "State capitalism run in the interests of the whole people is nothing but Socialism." "The Impending Catastrophe and how to Combat it" (Sept., 1917.), it was Lenin who first perpetrated the myth of "Socialism in one country." He thus finally revealed himself as the anti-Marxist adherent of that Bolshevik prototype, the Narodnik. It was these old Russian national revolutionaries who maintained that Russia would bypass capitalism and achieve a uniquely Russian Socialism. Stalin's formulation of "Socialism in one country" via Lenin's state capitalism, itself a by-product of Narodnik political influence, was under its ideological trappings but Russian nationalism come to ripe maturity.

Ironically enough the Russian "February Revolu-

tion" caught the Bolshevik elite on the wrong foot. It was the workers who took the initiative, not they; just as it was the ordinary soldiers who encompassed the fall of the reactionary Miliukov government. But the small, relatively backward working class of Russia could not decide or direct the course of the revolution where 80 per cent. of the population were peasants. It was the upsurge of the black discontent of the latter, coupled with the adroitly unscrupulous tactics of the Bolsheviks, which swept Lenin into power.

The Bolsheviks did not and could not represent the interests of the Russian working class. Even if they had vainly sought to do so, Engels had a word for them in envisaging a situation much more favourable than the Bolshevik seizure of power. In *The Peasant War in Germany* he expressed himself thus: "The worst thing that can befall a leader of an extreme party is to take over a government in an epoch where the situation is not ripe for the domination of the class he represents . . . in the interests of the movement itself he is compelled to defend the interests of an alien class . . . with the assertion that the interests of an alien class are their interests. Whoever puts himself in this awkward position is irrevocably lost."

While Marx's and Engels's writings show apprehension as to the reactions of the ruling class to any threat to their social privileges, to darkly hint, as the author does, that they were ruthless politicians incipiently formulating the techniques of modern dictatorships seems to show that the edge to his criticism can only be sharpened on the whetstone of malice. Yet even a cursory acquaintance with the works of Marx and Engels reveals a social vista incomparably superior to the motley crowd of purblind politicians and ideologists who clutter the bandwagon of "Western Democracy."

The author assumes that Marx and Engels held that Socialism would automatically, even naturally, convert the Capitalists into a depressed minority. We have found no evidence for this in their writings. Mr. Carew Hunt might do well to ponder on capitalism's own long and odious record of minority treatment.

The author refers to the role of force in Marx's political doctrine, but only in so far as to vaguely equate it with insurrection and civil war, leading possibly to political terrorism. Marx and Engels certainly saw their "dictatorship of the proletariat" as a force—not, however, a destructive physical force but a socially organized power of a politically mature working class. If they argue that an enforcement of that power may be needed to implement a majority decision, this is not inconsistent with democratic precept.

Moreover, Mr. Carew Hunt's objection to the force of socially organized power is inconsistent with his support of capitalism. Capitalism as a system of private property relations generates class conflicts which require the force of the State, with its control of the armed forces to provide the physical sanction for its continuance. Are we to conclude that the author's acceptance of this makes him anti-democratic? Again, the present order produces the most pernicious form of force in the shape of the organized violence of war (latent in re-armament; actual in war itself). If Mr. Carew Hunt's ideological defence of western capitalism is extended to military defence as well, must we rate him as a ruthless ideologue? And if he supported the last war and consequently "our glori-

ous ally Russia," was not he, even if for the period of war only, a supporter of Stalinism? We do not suggest this: it is merely a sample of the author's own logic.

The rest of Mr. Carew Hunt's book is pointless pin-pricking. This is his second book on Marxism. We wonder why. Cold print often produces chilling doubts. He may yet try again on the assumption "third time lucky"!

E.W.

## THE SCIENTIST AND WAR

"Do not reproach chemistry with the fact that nitro cellulose, of which the first application was to heal wounds and to advance the art of photography, was stolen away from these ultra pacific purposes for making smokeless powder and for loading torpedoes.

Do not curse the chemist when phenol, which revolutionised surgery, turned from the blessing to humanity into a fearful explosive when it had been discovered that nitration changes it into picric acid.

Let us hope in the meantime that war carried to its modern logical gruesomeness, shorn of its false glamour, deceptive picturesqueness and rhetorical bombast, exposed in all the nakedness of its nasty horrors, may hurry along the day when we shall be compelled to accept means for avoiding its repetition."

(Dr. L. H. Baekeland, in an address before the American Chemical Society, Seattle, Washington, 1915. Quoted by R. R. Butler in "Scientific Discovery," English Universities Press, 1947.)

## YOUR HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED

We need your help at once. For some time the cost of carrying on the Party's propaganda and other activities has been running ahead of income. One reason for this is the heavy loss we incur each month through selling the *Socialist Standard* below cost. We are reluctant to increase the price and we hope in time that with your help we may increase the sales which will reduce the loss. In the meantime we want your donations to enable us to meet necessary expenditure on the Party's general activities. Send what you can afford.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

SEPTEMBER,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## MARX "PROVED WRONG" AGAIN

THE *Railway Review* (29 July, 1955), publishes an article by Mr. A. B. Cramp, called "Wages in Society," in which he claims that an earlier article was wrong because it was based on Marx's theory of value—"which was disproved some 60 years ago by Philip Wicksteed, economist, Unitarian Minister and acknowledged friend of the working classes."

Mr. Cramp is strengthened in his opinion that Marx was wrong by the fact that G. B. Shaw was won over to Wicksteed's view. It may be remarked that if we are asked to believe that any attitude must be deserving of acceptance if Shaw supported it, we would have to swallow some very curious doctrines, among them Shaw's adoration of dictatorship and the dictators, Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler.

However Mr. Cramp tries to prove his points. Having briefly and not very clearly summarised the Marxian explanation of the tendency towards equal rates of profit between industries with much constant capital (machinery, etc.), and little labour and those with little constant capital and much labour, he goes on as follows:

"The implications of those views which Marx ignored are:—1. That if competition forces prices down, some part of the surplus value created by labour is being passed on to consumers. 2. If machinery made labour 'more productive,' it was in fact contributing to increased production in a way that made some return on capital just and equitable. 3. As capitalists were forced to increase orders for machinery,

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD September, 1955

another portion of surplus value was being passed on to labour in the capital goods industries, and labour thus benefited by increased employment.

"Finally, Marx's contention that competition would continually drive down profits has not been borne out by subsequent history."

Taking point (1) Mr. Cramp, who evidently is not very familiar with the real world, imagines that when prices fall those consumers who are the working class just sit back and watch their standard of living rising. In the real world of course this is the signal for the employers to start a drive to try to reduce wages. Mr. Cramp should look up the price fall of the early nineteen twenties and see what happened to wages, including railway wages.

His point (2) is that if machinery increases production this makes some return on capital "just and equitable." The logic of this is peculiar. As the machinery is itself produced by the working class why does this justify a return to someone else? Or does Mr. Cramp think, for example, that the locomotives on the railways were designed and constructed by the ex-shareholders who have now been provided with a guaranteed permanent income by a beneficent Labour Government?

In his point (3) Mr. Cramp appears to have hesitated in the middle and changed his line of thought. The sentence begins with the statement that Capitalists "passed on" surplus value "to labour" in the capital-goods industries; but it lamely ends with the different idea that it wasn't actually "passed on to labour" (after all the Capitalists still own it), but reached them in the form of "increased employment." Mr. Cramp might pause to ask himself why, if "increased employment" is a "benefit," the Capitalists don't pass the benefit on to themselves? Why do they bestow that benefit only on the workers and reserve to themselves the real benefit of continuing to own the capital they have invested in the capital goods industries?

Mr. Cramp's final point here is an alleged prophecy by Marx that profits would continually fall. If Mr. Cramp would turn to Chapter XIV, of "Capital," Volume III., he would find Marx going into some detail to explain why the rate of profit does not fall. Before examining the factors in detail Marx opens the chapter thus:—

"... the difficulty, which has hitherto troubled the vulgar economists, namely that of finding an explanation for the falling rate of profit, gives way to its opposite, namely to the question: How is it that this fall is not greater and more rapid: There must be some counteracting influences at work, which thwart and annul the effects of this general law, leaving to it merely the character of a tendency. For this reason we have referred to the fall of the average rate of profit as a tendency to fall."—(p. 272).

Mr. Cramp then risks a prophecy of his own, that the Government can always prevent unemployment.

"It was the discoveries of economists in the 30's, of Lord Keynes and others in England and abroad, that made lasting full employment possible. The Labour and Conservative parties favour different methods of achieving this end but today both are able to achieve it. In the inter-war period neither party knew how to do it."

We suspect that Mr. Butler and Mr. Gaitskell do not feel nearly so confident about this as does Mr. Cramp. Perhaps they recall that, despite the new knowledge provided by Lord Keynes and others to the Roosevelt Administration in U.S.A., the amount of unemployment in that country was as great in 1939 as it was six years earlier when Roosevelt started curing it with his "New Deal" policy.

## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD September, 1955

## CORRESPONDENCE

## REPLY

The letter of May 1st, in which A. W. L. Turner asked for a debate, was replied to as follows:

"If and when you can get the support of another political organisation, we would be happy to debate with you as their representative, and, that until such times as these conditions arise, you can use the same method of attacking the Party as is open to any other member of the public in opposition."

To his further letter, reproduced above, the following reply was sent:

"Replying to your letter of July 11th, we wish to inform you that the Party is prepared to debate with you through the columns of the 'Socialist Standard' on the question of the validity of our object and Declaration of Principles."

The first statement in Turner's letter is inaccurate. In fact, he "developed ideas" opposed to the Declaration of Principles of the Party. The resolution he refers to was a question put to a poll of the membership. The question was as follows:—

"Shall members of the Party who do not accept its Object and Declaration of Principles be asked to resign, and if they refuse to do so their membership be terminated?"

The majority of the members answered "yes" to the question.

As a late member of the Party Turner is well aware of the fact that he can put his opposition to the Party in writing for publication and reply in the columns of the SOCIALIST STANDARD. In this way the statements of both parties to the discussion or debate are set down in writing and the reader can check arguments and statements if in any doubt. This is the most satisfactory way of making the position of each side clear, and gives Turner all the opportunity he should need to state his case.

As Turner is constantly on our platform stating his case in opposition, which is more than equivalent to a formal debate, we are puzzled at his unnecessary request for an oral debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

A. W. L. TURNER.

## ARE YOU READING "THE WESTERN SOCIALIST"?

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD goes all over the world, from Mexico to Moscow, Iceland to Australasia. Often, people write in and tell us what it means to read a real Socialist paper. For example, this reader, 8,000 miles away: "to say how much I admire the SOCIALIST STANDARD and its refreshing and enlightening material; how cleansing this is to the mind! ... perhaps one day we will have a true demonstrable 'peace on earth, good will toward men,' because of such positive thinking."

We shall not be content until everyone reads the STANDARD. In the meantime, however, we think that no one who appreciates a good Socialist magazine should miss *The Western Socialist*. Published by our comrades in America and Canada, its viewpoint is the same as the SOCIALIST STANDARD'S, looking at American Capitalism through the sharp eyes of scientific Socialists.

The *Western Socialist* is bi-monthly and costs sixpence. Its latest issue has an illuminating article called "Profits v. Polio," another on "Belt-Line Culture," and a debate

on "Political versus Direct Action." There is a page of cuttings from the American Press, and the latest in a series of articles by one of the SOCIALIST STANDARD'S regular contributors. In addition, the editors are publishing the Socialist Declaration of Principles in different languages—this time in Italian.

Not nearly enough Socialists are reading *The Western Socialist*. From our head office, about 600 copies go out of each issue. That is an absurdly low figure for so good a magazine. We want to see many times that number being sold. One reason is that a bigger circulation will do our finances good. The other—and next important—reason is that we don't see how anyone can afford to miss what is in *The Western Socialist*.

If you aren't already a reader, buy a copy straight away. If you are, see that everyone you know buys it; six hundred will stand any amount of multiplying.

R.C.



## WICKED UNCLE

A reader in Canada writes asking for information about the nationalisation of the Bank of England. His letter and our reply are printed below.

Victoria, B.C., Canada.  
July 11th, 1955.

Dear Comrades,

A reformist friend of mine claims that when the Bank of England was nationalized, a 90 per cent. tax was imposed by the Labour Government upon the Government stock, thereby leaving the bondholders with only one-tenth of what they formerly owned. I can't see a Labour Government being so unkind to stock or bond-holders.

I showed my friend the affixed letter taken from the January '46 STANDARD, and he said the tax must have been imposed after nationalisation, because he has an uncle in England who was a shareholder in the Bank of England, and he lost "just about" everything through nationalization and the imposition of this tax.

If it doesn't take too much of your valuable time, I would like to get the facts on this matter.

Thanking you, I am,  
Yours for ours,  
J. G. JENKINS.

Reply.

Our correspondent provided his friend with a copy of a statement published in the SOCIALIST STANDARD of January, 1946 (not reproduced here), which explained the compensation terms given to Bank of England stockholders. The basis of the compensation was to give the holders Government stock sufficient to provide the same return as had been paid by the bank on average in the previous 20 years, i.e., 12 per cent. This was done by

giving them £400 Government stock yielding 3 per cent., in return for each £100 of their bank stock paying 12 per cent. The Government stock is redeemable by the Government in 1966, so that the stockholder will then or after be paid off at £400 for each £100 bank stock that was originally held.

The story given by uncle to his nephew is a pure fabrication. There has been no such tax imposed on his stock, either of 90 per cent. or any other figure, except, of course, income tax, which is, however, lower now than it was then. Can it be that uncle just wanted to plead that he is hard-up?

The utmost that he can say is that the present higher money rates have depressed all gilt-edged stocks. The stock given to Bank of England stockholders is at present down to about three-quarters of its nominal price so that if uncle had to sell now he would get about £300 for each £100 he originally held of Bank Stock. But this is a temporary situation. When money rates fall again the price will recover and in any event he will receive the full £400 on redemption in 1966. And in the meantime, irrespective of fluctuations of the selling price of the stock, he goes on receiving his £12 a year on each £400 stock, in place of the original £12 on £100 of Bank Stock.

Ed. COMM.

## Answers to Correspondents

C. Luff (British Columbia). Many thanks for letter. Hope to deal further with currency in later issue.

E. Littler (Ashton-in-Makerfield). We will deal with the problem you pose in a later issue.

Ed. COMM.

## "THE MIXTURE AS BEFORE"

## German Social Democracy Today

WE are in receipt of the "Action Programme" of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, adopted at the Party Conference at Dortmund in 1952, and revised by the Party Conference at Berlin in July, 1954.

If the date had not been appended to the title page nobody outside would have known.

The Social Democratic Party of Germany has not changed.

It remains what it was, a nationalistic capitalist outfit, peddling a typically Labourite programme of reforms, while professing to be Socialist.

Indeed, without the vague introductory references to Socialism in the foreword to the programme, it would hardly differ from its opponents at all.

Those with knowledge of the facts will read with amusement that

"The Social-Democratic Party of Germany commits itself more definitely than ever to the great ideas of Socialism and Democracy."—(p. 7).

"It remains for ever committed to . . . its great leaders from Karl Marx Frederick Engels, Ferdinand Lassalle and August Bebel down to Kurt Schumacher, Hans Boeckler and Ernst Reuter."—(p. 8).

Nobody would be more amazed at the cool effrontery

of this than Marx and Engels themselves, who were so angry with their friends in Germany for having anything to do with Lassalle's "Union of German Workers" (which they amalgamated with in 1875 at Gotha) that they warned them that they would publicly break with official German Social-Democracy, and denounce it.

Marx's language was so strong that when publishing his "Criticism of the Gotha Programme," 15 years later, Engels had to insert dots for some of the more unparliamentary expressions.

Why was it that a man of Marx's calibre should be so incensed at what the Social-Democrats in Germany were doing?

After all, he had endured outrageous slander and calumny for years without complaint.

Examination of the facts shows that they started then, what they are still doing now, supporting capitalism by advocating reforms.

Marx wrote a detailed criticism (which he said was more than the doctor had allowed) to W. Bracke, saying that the reason he was so annoyed was because the tale was spread about Europe (especially by Bakunin) that he and Engels secretly ran the Eisenach (or Social Demo-

cratic) Party from London, and were therefore personally responsible for a collection of daft rubbish which was actually quite meaningless.

This rubbish was the stock-in-trade of Ferdinand Lassalle, a romantic figure of the day who became an agitator, before being killed in a duel, at an early age.

He was a Malthusian and advocated State regulation of Labour to operate the "Iron Law of Wages."

F. Engels, in his letter of protest, wrote to Bebel

"Our people have allowed the Lassallean iron law of wages to be foisted on them, a law based on a quite antiquated economic view, namely, that the worker receives, on the average, only the minimum of the labour wage, because, according to Malthus theory of population there are always too many workers. Now, Marx has proved in 'Capital' that the laws regulating wages are very complicated, that sometimes one predominates and sometimes another, according to circumstances, that therefore they are in no sense iron, but very elastic." "Karl Marx" Selected Works Vol. II p. 589. Adoratsky, Moscow.

In Marx's own view, "since Lassalle's death the scientific understanding has made progress in our party, that wages are not what they appear to be, namely, the value, or price of labour, but only a masked form for the value, or price of labour power. Thereby the whole bourgeois conception of wages hitherto, as well as all the criticism hitherto directed against this conception was thrown overboard once for all, and it was made clear that the wage-worker has permission to work for his own life, i.e. to live, only in so far as he works a certain time gratis for the Capitalist, that the whole capitalist system of production turns on the prolongation of this gratis labour by extending the working day, or by developing the productivity, or the greater intensity of labour power, etc., that consequently the system of wage-labour is a system of slavery, and indeed a slavery that becomes more severe as the social forces of labour develop, whether the worker receives better or worse payment.

And after this understanding has made more and more progress in our party, one returns to Lassalle's dogmas although one must have known that Lassalle did not know what wages are, but following in the wake of the bourgeois economists, took the appearance for the essence of the matter." ("Karl Marx," page 574, Moscow, 1933.)

Apart from the dangerous ideas he advocated everything in Lassalle's character and actions made Marx detest him.

Both Marx and Engels smelt a rat when Lassalle wrote offering them editorial posts on his Berlin paper, if Marx would return to Germany, hinting that he might negotiate an amnesty for Marx.

It was not until 1928 that the truth was finally revealed that Lassalle, in fact, was a paid secret agent of Bismarck. (See "Bismarck and Lassalle" by Mayer, Berlin 1928, page 60.)

We have recalled a few facts to show how preposterous is the claim of the modern German Social-Democrats that Marx was one of "their leaders," alongside Lassalle.

Those interested or sceptical are referred to the "Critique of the Gotha Programme" (Volume II, "Karl Marx Selected Works." Adoratsky, Moscow, 1933), to verify the facts for themselves.

Everything in the "Unity" programme made Marx furious. Even the first clause—which ran—

"(1) Labour is the source of all wealth and all culture, and since useful labour is only possible in society

and through society, the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society," nearly drove him up the wall.

This is what he had to say about this mish-mash.

"In proportion as labour develops socially and becomes thereby a source of wealth and culture, poverty and neglect develop among the workers, and wealth and culture among the non-workers.

"This is the law of all history, hitherto. What had to be done was to prove that capitalist society had created the material conditions enabling the workers to lift this social curse." (Gotha Programme).

Is there any sign that modern German Social-Democracy has any intention of trying to lift this social curse of growing poverty with increasing wealth? Not the slightest.

This latest programme contains 50 pages of resolutions on nearly every conceivable subject except abolition of capitalism. On the contrary, they all concern its maintenance and improvement, including Tax and Penal Reform.

In this "Action Programme" we have the classic vote-catching Bill-of-Fare. Something for Everybody. Just like the I.L.P. Hitler, Mussolini, etc., etc., nobody has been forgotten.

The German Social Democrats are going to help the individual workers, civil servants, small business men, women, scientists, young people, the middle-classes, farmers, small farmers, "those in receipt of public relief" and refugees. (See Action Programme 1954.)

They want a Free Republic, increased production, increased public assistance "for the millions who suffer poverty," wages to be assured of a reasonable relation to profit (page 25), more credits to the middle-class (page 28) and "the Social-Democrats will sustain small and medium scale Private-Property" (page 26). Healthy Housing for Everybody, Tax Reforms, more equitable distribution of Wealth, a social Security scheme on Beveridge lines for Unemployed or Sick, Public Ownership of Coal, Iron, Transport and Power, Prison Reform, more Schools, Youth Hostels, and Judicial Reform, are a few more of the plums which the German Jack Horner is promised, if only he will stick in his thumb into the electoral pie for the Social Democratic Party.

What has all this to do with Socialism? Nothing.

Study the actual record of the Social-Democrats in power in Prussia and it becomes obvious that the election phrases are but the cloak for the Capitalist policies.

Zorgiebel, Social-Democrat Chief of Police in Berlin, mowed down unruly workers with the ferocity of a Cavaignac.

Like Labour Governments everywhere the Social Democrats in Germany were just as active in running capitalism whatever the consequences to the worker, because that was their mandate.

After years in power, they spawned—Hitler.

If the German workers had any idea of the real meaning of Marx's writings, they would reject the Social-Democrats.

When they learn more about the matter they will organise a Socialist Party.

Messrs. Ollenhauer, Schumacher, Boeckler and Reuter, are political crooks in the true tradition of Ferdinand Lassalle.

The German Philosopher, Nietzsche (an anti-Socialist), called them "clambering apes."

HORATIO.



## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

**August Bank Holiday Meetings.** Camberwell and Fulham Branch jointly organised two very successful meetings. In the afternoon, from 3 p.m. to 6.30 Comrades Garnham, Keys, Baldwin, McCarthy and Cash, spoke to an attentive audience of about 200 in Hyde Park. In the evening 12 members went out of London to Heron Court, Richmond, where Comrades Keys, Robertson, Baldwin and McCarthy addressed an audience of almost 200 from 7 o'clock until 10 p.m. About 10/- worth of literature was sold at the two meetings.

Under the heading: "A London Bus Worker tells of one of the earliest struggles for the Right to Unionise," the July 7th edition of the *Samasamajist*, an English language paper, published in Colombo, Ceylon, reprints Comrade Waters article in the SOCIALIST STANDARD, "The Story of the Tolpuddle Martyrs." It is hoped that the *Samasamajist* will reprint other articles from the SOCIALIST STANDARD in the future.

**The Swansea Branch** prepared a programme of activity for August which was to include outdoor meetings and an indoor public debate with the Welsh Nationalist Party. Whilst the outdoor meetings are underway with the visits of Comrades from Cheltenham and London, unfortunately the debate has fallen through owing to the inability of the Nationalists to finalise the arrangements. The national headquarters of the party threw the onus on their Swansea Branch who declined under pressure of work. Swansea Branch have challenged the Communists, Labourites and Welsh Republicans by personal letters and an open challenge in the Press but have had refusals all round. We now look forward to the visit of Com. Ambridge from London.

**Provincial Propaganda Tour.** Nottingham was visited by two London Comrades for a week from July 31st to August 7th. Thirteen meetings were held, with audiences averaging 300. Twenty dozen August STANDARDS were sold in addition to pamphlets and back issues of the STANDARD.

Dundee is being visited by two London Comrades who report very good meetings held—more details next month.

**The Autumn Delegate Meeting** is being held at Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road (nr. Victoria Station) on Saturday and Sunday, October 8th and 9th, commencing each day at 11 a.m. It is hoped to arrange a social at Head Office on the Saturday evening—more details will be given in the October SOCIALIST STANDARD.

**Obituary.** We regret to announce that another old member of the Party has recently died. Comrade A. Maskell, of Paddington Branch, who joined in 1927. He had been ill for a considerable time.

Prior to the war, he engaged in all Branch activity, and sold many copies of the S.S. to personal contacts. He was Branch Treasurer for more years than one wishes to recall, and throughout the war years was one of the most regular Branch attenders. In two election campaigns in N. Paddington he put his flat at our disposal for us as Committee Rooms, and it gave him great pleasure to feel that, despite his enforced inactivity, he could still be of assistance to the Party. Many of the older Paddington members will recall the assistance he gave them at all times and we should like to express our sympathies to his wife and family.

**Documentary Films** at H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (near Clapham Common Tube Station) every Sunday at 7.30 p.m. These films will be followed by a short talk by a Party lecturer. Questions and discussion follow. Admission free.

Oct. 2nd. Public Opinion. Speaker, R. Coster.  
 " 9th. The Beginning of History, W. Kerr.  
 " 16th. Mediaeval Village, V. Phillips.  
 " 23rd. The Story of Money, E. Wilmott.  
 " 30th. We've Come a Long Way, J. Trotman.  
 Nov. 6th. Man-One Family, J. Read.

P. H.

## THE REVOLUTIONARY PROPOSITION (Concluded)

To Socialists it is an almost pathetic spectacle to see the mass of the workers everywhere looking up to and voting for leaders though the latter have invariably let them down and failed to bring about any change in the great disparity between the status of the workers and that of the owners. The struggle between the two classes continues unabated. Every demand for an increase of wages is resisted by the employers as fiercely as ever. For, does it not curtail the Capitalists' profits? Whatever improvements have been made in working conditions for the slaves in the industrially-advanced countries in the West, and in the backward countries in the East, have been and are in the interest of the employers themselves. All reforms have left the problem untouched. The rich have become richer, the poor poorer. The working-class continues to be excluded from ownership and control of the means and instruments of wealth production and there-

fore from the degrees of social dignity and economic independence that modern man could enjoy. Nationalisation of industries is still being dangled before the eyes of the workers as a panacea, but wherever industries have been partially or—as in Russia and elsewhere—almost completely nationalized, it has not altered the position of the workers one iota. In some respects it has made matters worse for the workers.

That the fallacy and uselessness of nationalisation as a remedy for working-class problems can on occasion be admitted even by its advocates, with impunity, would show how deplorably slow the masses are to draw conclusions and move in the right, i.e., in the revolutionary direction. Thus, Jean Jaurès was recently quoted by the Vienna *Arbeiter-Zeitung* as having stated:

"Whether the worker toils for the State, the Department, the city-councils, or for privates, is all the same.

Whether the employer is called State or tailor, the dependency and the misery are always the same. If the Socialist organization meant nothing but the extension of the present State enterprises and public works in their present-day form, it would be nothing but a colossal swindle . . . as long as the State does not stamp out the Capitalistic organisation and establish a new organisation in its place, the State is caught by this Capitalist rule in the same way as the private producers: its despotic hand is impotent against the terrible steelhard juggernaut and so becomes, willy-nilly, the slave of the present social order of the brutal machines which trample on and squeeze the workers just as a steam press squeezes the grapes and pours forth riches for the fortunates of the world, but leaves for the people nothing but the useless residue of want and misery."

And in another issue of the paper they quoted in a leading article:

"The transfer of all private capital to the State does not by a long way do away with the function of capital, and does not by a long way exclude the exploitation of the working-class—it is in truth FAR FROM BEING SOCIALISM."

Yet, they call themselves Socialists while all the time doing the dirty work of the exploiters and calling for more State-control! Is it so difficult for the multitude of voters and the dues-paying party-members to perceive the fraud and swindle that is being perpetrated upon them?

Is it too much to expect that the two world-wars also would have opened the workers' eyes after the smoke had cleared and shown the old great gulf between the two classes, the haves and the have-nots, unchanged in both the victorious and the defeated countries alike? And is the swindle not equally clear in Russia, where even the Western democratic facilities which the Russian workers had precariously grasped for a moment in 1918, were again lost under the bloody onslaught of the Bolshevik monster? Incidentally, the fact that the present enemies (East v. West) fought hand in hand to destroy the "militarism" of an adversary whom they are now straining every nerve to re-arm, should convince the most credulous of workers that NOT ideologies, but sordid commercial interest and loot are the stakes in these conflicts.

If some innocent youngster, such as the writer was when he made his first steps in Socialism, were to suggest to these Austrian or, for that matter, any Continental "Socialist" or "Communist" leaders, that they might in the present "unique and fateful" emergency urge the revolutionary Marxian solution, i.e., the expropriation of the expropriators, and the establishment of a classless and moneyless society, as the only way to ensure real peace and prosperity for all, such a suggestion would only be considered as simply incongruous and impossible by these "Socialists." It was only to be expected that the leaders of the S.P.O. and the *Arbeiter Zeitung* also would do nothing but just echo the great fears, add some sloppy sentimentalities and pretend standing aghast at this development.

No wonder that, in spite of the Capitalists themselves living now uneasily and even dangerously, armament

manufacturers are reassured and consider their profits safe, just as "Nehru's exposé of the Socialist pattern of society provided a stimulus for the Bombay stock-market. The market reflected the encouragement to investors from Nehru's speech! it led to widespread buying, and the market is again buoyant." Slyly, the *Times* correspondent described Nehru's politics as "Ghandian principles and modern politics, economic theories, and—what appears to be essential—a touch of humbug."

If any of the exploiters of labour ever feared action by these self-styled "Socialist" leaders endangering the safety of their profits and dividends, they have now proof absolute that their fears were unjustified. What present fears persist, spring from the discovery of nuclear energy which, only under the idiotic system of Capitalism, is primarily applied to the forging of weapons for the most effective mass destruction and so becomes a nightmare to all humanity. The fears then stem from the existence of nuclear weapons and the uncertainty whether the Capitalists with their managers and statesmen in East and West, and in the other opposing camps, will be capable of containing and permanently controlling their fine virtues of greed, commercial rivalry in the world's markets and resources, lust for power, jealousy, envy, hatred and mistrust engendered by the possibility of extracting tremendous wealth from the exploitation of a disinherited working-class, and so prevent a fatal explosion and world conflagration.

The writer felt it necessary to restate what the SOCIALIST STANDARD has in much better form already pointed out on the situation. I wished that in particular GILMAC'S fine article: "Should we Despair?" in the January issue, were read and re-read, and taken to heart by all workers for the really welcome stimulant it is in these dark days. It is time indeed that the workers shook off the old dirty cloak of nationalism, the illusions of nationalisation, and that—in the words of Marx—"he faced with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind."

Much would have to be said about such words as "nationalism" and "patriotism," so assiduously fostered among the people from the cradle to the grave. But taking: "Right or wrong my country" at its face value, we would say to the workers: "If you find it hard, or if you have any scruples in discarding your nationalist sentiments, since they have become the apex of the retreat from reason, here is an authority on the value of nationalist sentiments: Sir Winston Churchill. His words:

"What is the use of being a famous race and nation . . . if at the end of the week you cannot pay your housekeeping bill?" should help you to discard nationalism and become CLASS-conscious!

R.

## BUDDHA PUTS THE CLOCK BACK

IN quite a number of homes a little statue smiles down at us from his place on the mantelpiece. There he sits cross-legged, displaying a broad belly with a prominent navel. His ageless face wears an enigmatic smile as he placidly contemplates the best room in the home. Carved in ivory, jade or soapstone, the charming statue of Buddha never palls on us or to judge from his expression, we on him.

In some Asiatic countries Buddhism is the national religion. It may come as a shock to think that but for an accident of geography, whereby we were born in Europe instead of in Asia that this statuette might not have been an ornament in an English sitting-room but an idol of worship.

Buddha, born in 563 B.C., the son of a reigning Prince in North India, was so surfeited with the idle luxury of



palace life that at the age of 30 he set forth alone to seek deliverance for all mankind from the unhappiness and suffering which he found to permeate existence in whatever form. He taught that existence is impermanent and filled with suffering and that there is no immortal soul which separates one man from another but that all men are part of the universe and that in nature the Brotherhood of man is an accomplished fact and so therefore war is foolishness.

Buddha pointed out "Four Noble Truths." Firstly, that the world is filled with suffering, discontent, disease and unhappiness. The second deduces its cause to be wrong desire or craving. The third "Truth" is that by annihilating wrong desire we remove the cause of suffering. As we think, so we become, or in the words of a Buddhist Scripture "all that we are is the result of what we have thought." The fourth "Truth" points out what he thinks to be the nature of the cure; by treading the Path of the Middle Way between extremes. But the Buddhist then goes on to make a point: Nature has taken millions of years to evolve the humble flower, shall man be perfected in 70? He then enunciates the theory of rebirth: man is reincarnated in another life perhaps in the body of an insect or animal or any living creature. Promotion to Nirvana partly depends upon the extent to which the aspirant annihilates desires.

Buddhism is not only a religion, it is also a way of life. For over 2,000 years it has held sway over nearly one-third of mankind. In some countries, such as in Thailand, it is customary for all men to become Buddhist monks at some time in their lives, though with an eye to realism this is confined to three months in a man's life for this is about the maximum time that it is considered practical to abstain from sex and the other pleasures of life.

As a corollary to civilization it is necessary to renounce many individual liberties of action and personal desires, and man co-operates with society instead of acting anarchically. For instance, industry, for obvious reasons, demands that workers keep to pre-arranged hours irrespective of personal convenience. In most walks of life civilization demands repression of personal desires for the general benefit of those living together in society.

The emphasis on the equality of the spiritual potentiality of mankind is a form of democracy not essentially political but in the humanistic man-to-man sense that all men are merely part of a one universal whole. In Confucianist China, where in the past women have held an inferior position the advent of Buddhism which does not differentiate between the sexes (unlike Confucianism) gave them hope and drew strength from their support. Kuan Yin, the good-looking Chinese goddess of mercy, is the patron saint of Chinese women and has held an unassailable position of honour in the women's quarters in many Chinese homes. This Buddisatva (a Buddhist saint) previously a male has conveniently changed sex as a sop to the modesty of Chinese women. It can be observed that in Buddhist countries there is not the same sort of snobishness that frequently pervades society in the West because of this feeling that all men are one with the universe.

Again the emphasis that man is merely part of nature together with speculation on the infinite which is part of Buddhist philosophy enhances the imagination, and this in turn leads to a development of the artistic faculties. The importance of Buddhism in the development of art in the East is universally recognised.

But Buddhism has other effects on its adherents. The belief in the transitoriness of an existence that passes from one form of animal life to another gives a sense of essential impermanence and unimportance of human life to the Buddhist. This has the effect of diminishing the importance of the material conditions of environment and of the events of daily life. This makes the Buddhist fatalistic, for example to the effects which arise from the capitalist-worker antagonism in society. Wages, hours of working, living conditions—what does it matter when one believes one has a constant succession of lives to live. He who is too poor to be able to afford to keep a wife or to sample sexual pleasure does not bother to think out the cause of his poverty—perhaps in the next reincarnation he may be a ram and can then make up for lost time. Besides to receive more money means that more desires can be indulged in and this is against the tenets of Buddhism.

What a useful religion this is to a ruling-class. When they are surfeited with luxury or debauchery how pleasant to lead a frugal life for a change and work the toxic matter out of the system. And for the underprivileged it enables them to bear the hardships that arise from their class position and thus they can carry the master-class on their backs with barely a groan.

Even the pacific side of Buddhism, which one might think could be a drawback in an acquisitive society where wealth, markets and trade routes have to be defended by the workers for their masters with force of arms, can be overcome. Japanese Capitalism has obviously found the answer to this.

By posing the belief in the reincarnation of the soul Buddhism has put a brake upon rational thinking and obscures the economic motives in society. This helps to prevent man from logically considering the reasons why riches and poverty exist side by side and such other contradictions in society which should be self evident. This in turn discourages the Buddhist from organizing in Trade Unions and in the political field to end the system of exploitation.

Belief in Buddhism robs the material events of life of their reality and of the interdependence of their cause and effect. Only the tenets of Buddhism count, and the believer has to try to build up as large a stock as possible of individual good deeds letting the stream of life flow by. It is of no use bothering to change society because it is thought that a lifetime is but an inconsiderable part of the long journey to the goal of Nirvana. The Buddhist is not concerned with organising the working-class to end exploitation but with his mind clogged with religious claptrap has acted as a brake on the development of ideas leading to a materialist conception of history. Thus Buddhism by its opposition to the Socialist movement is playing its part in preventing the establishment of Socialism and is in effect helping to hold back the clock of social change.

F. OFFORD.

#### BOREHAM WOOD

Will members and sympathisers willing to cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood contact:

I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,  
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

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SUNDAYS			
Hyde Park	...	3 p.m.	
East Street (Walworth)	...	June 6th	11 a.m.
		" 13th	12.30
		" 20th	11 a.m.
		" 27th	12.30
Finsbury Park	...		11.30 a.m.
Whitestone Pond (Hampstead)	...		11.30 a.m.
Beresford Square (Woolwich)	...		8 p.m.
WEDNESDAYS			
Gloucester Road Station	...		8 p.m.
FRIDAYS			
Station Road, Ilford	...		8 p.m.
Earls Court Station	...		8 p.m.
SATURDAYS			
Jolly Butchers Hill (Nr. Wood Green Tube Stn.)	...		2.30 p.m. sharp
Ealing Green	...		3 p.m.
Rushcroft Road, Brixton	...		8 p.m.
Castle Street, Kingston	...		8 p.m.
Katherine Street, Croydon	...		4 p.m.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

#### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

#### GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

#### LEYTON BRANCH LECTURES

at  
GROVE HOUSE, HIGH ROAD, E.10  
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Mondays at 8 p.m.

Sept. 12th. "The British Labour Movement"—

R. Coster

Sept. 26th. "The Socialist Party Principles"—

H. Young

Questions and Discussion

Admission free



## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL.**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP.**—Secretary: R. Smith, 1, Littlejohn Street, Dundee. Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 7th and 21st Sept, 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**OLDHAM.**—Group meets Wednesdays 14th and 21st Sept, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

**RUGBY.**—Group meets alternate Mondays 5th and 19th Sept, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

**PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS**  
**PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2**  
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**SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.**  
Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist  
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## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY.** Correspondence to Secretary. c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., meets at 7.30 p.m. No meetings in August. Spt. 1st, 15th and 29th.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT.** The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON.** Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club '23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

**CROYDON** meets each month, 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

**EALING** meets every Friday from 9th Sept, at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM AND CHELSEA.** Correspondence and enquiries to Jon Keys, 6, Koppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3. Outdoor meetings, Gloucester Road, Wednesday evenings, 8 p.m. and Earls Court, Friday evenings, 8 p.m.

**GLASGOW (City)** meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halle, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW (Kelvingrove)** meets alternate Mondays, 5th and 19th Sept, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to I. MacDougall, 26, Arnprior Quadrant, Castlemilk.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** Enquiries to A. D. Oliver, 13, Penywern Road, Earls Court, S.W.3. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday, in month at 1, Broadhurst Gardens (nr. John Barnes).

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. Secretary: 54, Ashdale House, Seven Sisters Road, N.4.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, D. Russell, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 6th and 10th Sept, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 3709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. C. May, 1 Hanover Road, N.W.10.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**ST. PANCRAS** meets 1st and 3rd Fridays, 2nd and 16th Sept, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o Head Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7-9.30 p.m., at Khavyam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Outdoor meetings Sunday 8 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS Housing, Planning and Modern Life

No. 614 Vol. 51 October, 1955

4½ PER CENT.

*"I was struck with the magnificence of the building . . . 'One should think,' said I, 'that the proprietor of all this must be happy.' 'Nay, Sir,' said Johnson, 'all this excludes but one evil — poverty.'"* Boswell's Life of Johnson

THE CLASS STRUGGLE  
AND SOCIALISM

PEOPLE MARRYING in 1955 have no better prospect of somewhere to live than they had in 1945. That is not an uninformed guess by this writer: it is a statement made on the third of July this year in the *Sunday Pictorial*. How much attention it gained, among the nymphs and the strip cartoons, is uncertain. It should have had a great deal—most of all from those who believe that capitalism can solve its problems.

PEACE, PERFECT PEACE

Between the wars, four million houses were built in Great Britain, and by 1939 there were twelve millions altogether. With the slum clearance programmes two-thirds completed, about a quarter of a million remained condemned as unfit for habitation, and nearly half a million were "overcrowded." Another half-million were destroyed or severely damaged during the war—most in docklands and crowded industrial areas, and so anticipating further "slum clearance." In 1945, authorities agreed that four million new houses were needed in the next ten years; in fact, at the end of that period two millions have been built.

THE CONFUSION OF  
A CONFUSIONIST

Even allowing that it is only half the estimate, two millions is an impressive number. Indeed, nobody wants figures to know that a great deal of building has been done. Small, semi-rural towns have dilated to populous urban areas; on the outskirts of cities, the council estates (and latterly "private" ones, too) have mushroomed; in the cities themselves, clumps of prefabs and great chest-of-drawers blocks of flats have risen on bomb-sites, waste patches, football fields—every place, in fact, where there was land to spare for the housing of working people.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

The solution of the housing problem has been the great promise of the post-war years; getting a council house, once slightly shameful ("corned beef islands," the estates were called), has become heart's desire to millions. Local authorities, faced with endless lists of applicants, made dire need almost their sole criterion. Most have used the "points" system to ensure that the houses went to the largest families with the worst accommodation: a temporary relief which ensures more overcrowding in a few years on the council estates. Outside of what is provided by the councils, the letting of houses has entirely disappeared. Virtually all that is available to childless or one-child couples is furnished accommodation at extortionate prices, or house-purchase.

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4



For most people, buying a house is out of the question. Usually a tenth of the price must be paid as deposit; add on legal charges and other expenses, and an initial outlay of £300 is needed for a very modest house. Recently, it has become possible to obtain 95 per cent. and even 100 per cent. mortgages: that sends up the weekly repayments to something like £4—again, out of the question for most people. More are buying houses, because it is the only solution to their housing problem; over 90 per cent. of them—according to figures recently published by the Association of Building Societies—houses costing £2,000 or less. In short, some working people can buy houses, but only cheap ones.

What is obvious is that all to-day's housing schemes rest entirely on the assumption of full employment. Buying a house takes 15 or 20 years, and if you do it for less than £3 a week you're lucky. Council tenancies cost approximately double those of the older houses with controlled rents. In the last few years there has been a great deal of talk about "improved standards of living" that has been based largely on working people buying their own houses and being fixed up in smart little boxes with all-electric kitchens. The truth is that most people, with jobs and plenty of overtime, struggle for financial survival after having their housing problem solved. The *Daily Herald*, on the 16th of last month, gave some sobering facts about the lucky ones who are supposed to exemplify the better standard of living:

"In a London court last week an eviction order was granted against a £15-a-week factory worker for non-payment of rent. He has been living in a 32s.-a-week council house, with three young children, a host of debts, and a TV set.

The man who sought and won the eviction order against him on behalf of the local council had no sense of elation about the success of his mission.

He, too, is living above his means. . . . He can't afford to smoke or drink. He hasn't a suit to his name—and wears sports clothes for economy reasons. He has already borrowed £245 against his life insurance—and he now faces a summons for non-payment of £5 rates."

The housing problem, in fact, is not post-war at all: it is the continuation of one of capitalism's oldest problems. The working class never has been adequately housed. Before the war it was the slum problem—re-housing people who lived in such squalor that their children were malformed and tuberculous. Plenty still live in those conditions, by the way, and are not rehoused because they can't afford to be. However, the dominant factor in the housing problem since the war has been that most people are in work and so are asking for houses to themselves. In this writer's town there is a row of houses, built just before the war, which still bears a signboard announcing in faded letters that £20 down will buy one. Passers-by lament the change without realizing what it was. Now, they haven't houses; then, they hadn't the money. As soon as there is legislation which allows rents to be raised (and that seems a near-future inevitability) the post-war housing problem will fall back into its century-old perspective of people needing houses but unable to seek them.

For—and this is the great fact about the housing problem—houses are not produced to satisfy needs. Nor is anything else, in this world. Food is not produced to be eaten, clothes to be worn, or anything else for its utilitarian purpose. All things, under capitalism, are produced with one motive only: sale and profit. Thus, at times when millions have needed it, food has been destroyed; thus, at any time (including today) anybody can

have what he can pay for and nothing else. Note, please, that rich people have no housing problem. *The Observer* and the *Sunday Times* advertise houses to satisfy anyone; at £4,000 and upward.

How is it, though, that two million new houses in ten years leave the demand still unappeased? There are all sorts of contributory immediate answers—people keep on marrying, millions have shared houses for years, and so on. They all boil down to the fact that working-class families are in unsuitable accommodation and want to get out of it: the more important fact is that it *always* was unsuitable. Houses built for working people are small, cheap houses—soon overcrowded and soon dilapidated. The labourers' dwellings and tenements and industrial estates of the last century are the slums of this. Many thousands of people, incidentally, will still live in



houses which were flung up over a 100 years ago to cram workers into the industrial towns. Go through the Lancashire mill-towns, and you see rows of grimy little dwellings with dates—1833, 1834, and so on—on their fronts and earth-closets at their backs. Go through London's suburbs, and you see the unlovely prefabs of 1945; many of them now are having their lives formally extended for several years because their inhabitants cannot be rehoused elsewhere. So there is a perpetual process like that of the Augean stables, where the troublesome matter flows in at exactly the same rate as it it cleared out.

The biggest post-war housing project of all has been the building of "new towns." Really vast estates attached to smallish country towns, they are the planners' pride. It is worth examining them to see how much they really contribute to better living standards and human happiness. Essentially, they represent the way of life provided for the modern industrial worker; the north-country towns do the same for older, heavier industries, and the outer suburbs of southern cities the different amenities of the petrol-engine and electric-motor era. In them is incorporated, actually and potentially, the culture of the mid-twentieth century.

A new town has no music-halls, no street traders or little gold-mines. It is laid out in careful uniformity, and

all the inhabitants keep their front gardens tidy because they are told they must. The buildings are grouped neatly according to function or income; shops together, civic buildings together, rows of houses with garages for the higher-income groups. Much has been made of this last point; in new towns, they say, the officials and professional people and managers live close to the rest. The fact may be true, but its implication is nonsense. There is as much snobbery in the new towns as anywhere else, and placing people close together makes no difference to it. In every big city in the world, wealth and poverty are contiguous with a world between them. The writer knows plenty of places where one side or one end of a street regards the other as "a different class."

The workers in the new towns are dependent on local industries, which are mostly of the newer sorts—plastics, electronics and so on. With largish families (the chief condition for getting the houses) and high rents, they can hardly lead lavish lives. Consequently, there are not many pubs or cinemas, and the new towns—like the estates—form "community associations" which really are means of recreation for people who have not much money and must look after young children in the evenings. Local transport generally is poor and the distances to former neighbourhoods considerable: the new towns impose fixed ways of living as firmly as the old.

Are those better, more satisfying ways? Consider the man living in Harlow or Stevenage or one of the others. He is fairly young and fairly skilled and has a family. He works in a radio or plastics factory; he works as many hours as he can to make ends meet, and if the factory closes half the town will be unemployed. He has a television set and complains of the programmes. His house has a refrigerator in which his wife keeps a pint of milk overnight during three weeks of the year. His wife uses Omo and Daz so that her family's clothes are

white, and they all use green toothpaste to keep their breath sweet. They haven't a book in the house, but they take in *Reveille*, *Tit-bits*, *Woman* and the *Daily Mirror*. They are scared of having more children, getting diseases, and Henry's firm becoming slack, and they do the football pools in the hope of buying themselves out of it all.

The condition of the working class, in new towns and old towns remains a deplorable one of insecurity and want. If material improvements can be discerned (which is debatable) they are outweighed by frustrations and fears of which our grandfathers knew nothing. Indeed, the degree scarcely matters: if things became much better they would still be bad. Housing is one of the innumerable problems which capitalism has created and cannot solve, simply because capitalism has no care for human needs. Many people refuse to believe that such problems cannot be solved within the capitalist system: the astonishing thing is that they are refusing to believe their own eyes.

Can Socialism house people, as people should be housed? The short and simple answer is that there will be no money barrier to the satisfaction of *any* need when all the means of production are owned by every person. The cheap and shoddy in houses, as in everything else, will vanish when there is no profit motive. As for the question of space—well, think of all the buildings which nobody will want. Shops, banks, exchanges, offices of every description . . . and, in addition, a lot (an awful lot) of buildings which only a perverse society could think suitable for human beings.

R. COSTER.

NOTE: The figures about rents and house prices apply to southern England. In the north and in Scotland they are rather lower. So are wages.

## THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND SOCIALISM

(Correspondence continued from August issue)

(We have received a further letter from the critic to whose letter we replied in the August issue.—Ed. Comm.)  
Golders Green, N.W.11.  
22 August, 1955.

The reply to my letter on the subject of Class Struggle and Socialism (August issue) makes no serious attempt to meet my criticisms. The class struggle, in any meaningful sense, is a struggle between *class* and *class*. The struggle for Socialism (I would not choose the word struggle here, but accept it for the purpose of the present discussion) is not of one class against another but is against the whole theory and practice of classes in society. It may be deplorable that benevolent old gentlemen say, in ostrich fashion, "Let us ignore classes . . ." but when they add " . . . let us regard each other as human beings" they are stating no less than the essential truth about how people *will* regard each other in Socialist society. And if the achievement of such a society is our conscious aim, then we cannot start too soon to put into practice the theory we value so highly.

The Ed. Comm frequently uses the phrase "the Socialist working class." This is not a very helpful classification, because it confuses two quite different functions. In so far as people are members of a class they

think and act in class terms. In so far as people are Socialists they work for a Socialist, i.e., a classless society. This is *not* to say that workers cannot be Socialists. It is a criticism of the statement "I want Socialism because I'm a worker." This statement is misleading. You want Socialism because you want to change society from a class-divided one in which you are a worker to a classless one in which you are simply and more fully a human being.

"The interests of the human race are bound up with the aspirations of the oppressed working-class in its struggle with Capitalist domination." There is some truth in this, to the extent that workers are struggling against the Capitalist system and to introduce a system more worthy of human beings. But the separate interests of either of two antagonistic classes cannot be *identical* with the interests of the whole. The very term "class" is by definition descriptive of less than the whole of society, and that is why Socialism is not a class issue but a human one.

An individual Capitalist can be a Socialist and can join in the work of achieving Socialism on the same terms as any other person. Obviously he doesn't have working-class aspirations—except in the sense that he seeks the



welfare of workers. He, in common with the worker, can have no greater aspiration than the welfare of the whole of humanity. Whatever makes one aspire to Socialism, one certainly does not do so from the standpoint of a class that is to disappear with the realisation of Socialism.

It is quite true that I reject the conception of a Socialist working class taking political action to end class society. The Ed. Comm calls this "the Socialist conception." Let us see to what extent this is true. The statement by the Executive Committee in the August issue on the interpretation of Clause 6 of the Declaration of Principles explains that "when the workers understand the source of their subject position and the action they must take to abolish it, they can do so by sending representatives to Parliament to take control of the State power for this purpose." Coming into what the Executive Committee calls the region of conjecture, allowance has then to be made for "a theoretically possible attempt in some form of violent sabotage during the revolutionary reorganisation. The control of the armed forces during this period will be an effective deterrent to any such violent attempt without these forces having necessarily to be used. Should a violent minority attempt to destroy Socialism they would have to be forcibly dealt with."

There are good grounds for the doubts that those both inside and outside the Socialist Party have about the validity of this approach. Note the curious view that Socialists would be justified in threatening or using violence to deter the violence of others. Remember that Socialism is a society in which, to quote from the Party pamphlet on *War*, "no coercion will be needed because each will gain from co-operating harmoniously with his fellows." Many Socialists feel that it spoils the whole thing if the rider is added "but we are prepared to bash those who won't co-operate." And they have some reason for feeling this. "A violent minority attempting to destroy Socialism" does not present a picture of any kind of possible social situation that I could imagine. If it was an attempt to destroy London or the Red Army, for example, it would be meaningful to me. However, a majority at least of the E.C. must be able to visualise circumstances in which Socialism could be physically battled for. We must then proceed to ask what further social arrangements will accompany the Socialist armed forces. Are we to have Socialist prison camps, judges, and spies? Fortunately, as a "critic" I do not expect to be called upon to take up arms to defend the revolution.

Another objection to the view expressed by the E.C. is more serious, and will be treated accordingly. We are asked to imagine a stage in the future development of society when the mass of people will be Socialists, i.e. will have abandoned support of Capitalist institutions, and will have in general the attitudes to social issues that Socialists have today. What will have happened to institutions while these tremendous changes in attitudes will have taken place? The E.C. writes of such entities as Parliament, the State, the powers of government, the armed forces, as though they will remain substantially unchanged and function as they do today, but in an environment in which the barometer of social attitudes will be registering Socialism. For such a colossal disparity to exist between prevailing attitudes and institutions in any human society would be as major a denial of all that has been learned in terms of every social science as the denial of the law of gravity would be in physical terms.

I have so far largely only criticised the case put for-

ward by the Socialist Party. For a statement of positive views which are consistent with the above criticisms, readers are referred to the article "The Socialist Movement," in the April, 1955 issue of *Forum* (published by the S.P.G.B.) and to the publications of the movement for Social Integration.

Yours sincerely,  
S. R. PARKER.

#### REPLY

This correspondence started with our critic objecting to a statement published in these columns which declared that the interests of the human race are bound up with the triumph of a Socialist working class in the struggle to establish Socialism. (See August issue.) Our critic's first line of attack was to state that victory in the class struggle could only be a class victory because the class struggle is the struggle between those who buy and those who sell labour power.

In reply we pointed out that this is a complete misconception of the term class struggle. In his second letter no reference is made to this; from which we conclude that that line of attack based on misconception of the class struggle has been abandoned.

The second line of attack is on the idea of a "Socialist working class" striving for Socialism. Our critic writes:—"In so far as people are members of a class they think and act in class terms. In so far as people are Socialists they work for a Socialist, i.e. a classless society."

This is a statement that may have the appearance of containing some meaning but which in fact says nothing. As all the people are members of a class it asks us to accept that all people "think and act in class terms." If this meant anything it could only imply that they therefore cannot act and think in terms of a classless society. But our critic hastens to explain that it does not mean this, for he writes:—"This is not to say that workers cannot be Socialists." (To which we would add that some individual Capitalists become Socialists, for example Marx's collaborator F. Engels.)

We are therefore left to wonder what the statement does mean. And whatever it does mean it would have to apply equally to our critic's conception of Socialism coming through the struggle between two "groups", Socialist and non-Socialist. It would then read:—"In so far as people are members of a group they think and act in group terms."

Our critic carries this point about class a stage further when he says that "the separate interests of either of the two antagonistic classes cannot be identical with the interests of the whole. The very term 'class' is by definition descriptive of less than the whole of society, and that is why Socialism is not a class issue but a human one."

Certainly on a long-term view Socialism is in the interest of the human race as a whole. A current illustration of this is the fact that war, inseparable from Capitalism, threatens the existence of civilization. The fact remains, however, that it is in the immediate interest of the working class, the exploited class, to abolish Capitalism and establish Socialism; the same cannot be said of the exploiting class.

Again we must point out that the above passage also necessarily applies to our critic's conception of a group struggle, for, "by definition" a group is "descriptive of less than the whole of society."

A further point made by our critic needs to be dealt with, that is the curious passage in the first paragraph of the present letter in which he tells us, in reference to the

struggle for Socialism, "I would not choose the word struggle here, but accept it for the purpose of the present discussion."

What precisely does our critic mean by this? Anyone coming to the correspondence now for the first time might imagine that, since our critic says he would not choose the word struggle, someone else must have foisted it on him. The fact is that the word was chosen by our critic and by nobody else. In his first letter (see August issue) he wrote of his own conception of Socialism coming by way of struggle between two groups, Socialists in one group and "those who are not Socialists, and who either support or acquiesce in the continuation of Capitalist institutions" in the other group. He repeatedly referred to it as a "struggle."

In our reply to our critics first letter we pointed out that he omitted to tell us how this group struggle is to lead to Socialism. This of course is a crucial question. He rejects the conception of a Socialist Working Class taking control of the machinery of government to establish Socialism and offers instead the conception of Socialism coming through the struggle between the two groups. But instead of answering our question as to how this struggle will lead to Socialism he offers the disingenuous plea that

## PEACE, PERFECT PEACE!

### The Story of the Nobel Peace Prize

**M**OST people are aware of the existence of the Nobel Peace prize. They read, or hear, a news bulletin every year, giving the names of the fortunate recipients.

Rather fewer know that the founder of this bequest was Alfred Nobel, the millionaire explosives manufacturer. In 1896, £1,750,000 was left by him to endow a trust fund divided to produce five prizes of about £8,000 each annually to a chosen physicist, chemist, medical man, writer and/or Pacifist who, in the opinion of the selectors, had best served the cause of peace.

Some may find it rather surprising that Alfred Nobel, who made a fortune from war, should donate a large sum to what might be considered the pursuit of Peace.

The facts show that, whatever his intentions, the Nobel Peace Prize has not had the slightest effect in preventing or lessening the incidence of War. Indeed, Alfred Nobel is but one of a number of paradoxical figures of this modern topsy-turvy world.

No less so is Albert Einstein, a Nobel Prize winner, who wrote to President Roosevelt in 1939 drawing attention to the power of the Atom Bomb, and urging him to set science working on it in case the Nazi's got in first; only to say afterwards that "if World War III is fought with atom-armed missiles then World War IV will be fought with clubs," and sign the famous scientists declaration with Bertrand Russell, in July 1955, predicting that radio-active dust could end the human race.

Alfred was the second son of Immanuel Nobel, who had a small chemical works in Stockholm in the sixties of the last century.

The family managed to land a contract for the Russian Navy in the Crimean War and for mines to be sown in the Baltic. These in fact did no harm, as they never went off.

In 1870 Alfred took over and moved to Hamburg. During this period the firm invented a powerful new explosive, which he christened "Dynamite." This material was the atomic bomb of that day, compared to kid's stuff like

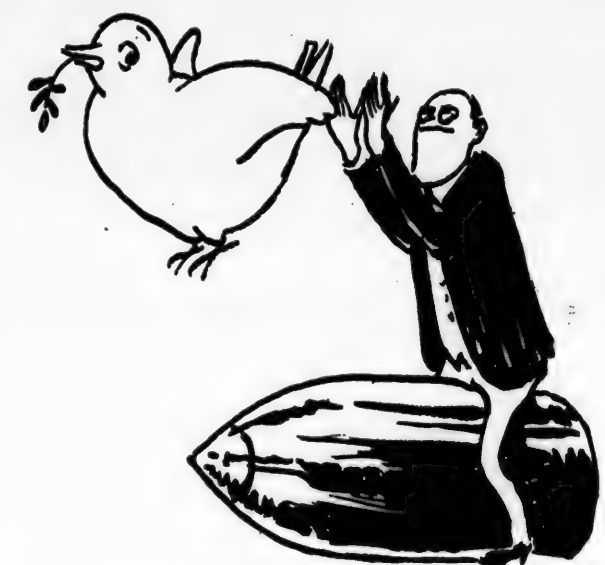
he "would not choose" the word that he did choose, the word struggle.

We can, of course, understand his difficulty. In our August issue a statement was published setting out the view of the S.P.G.B. on the unlikely but "theoretically possible" attempt by a minority of opponents to Socialism to sabotage the establishment of Socialism after a Socialist majority had gained control of the machinery of government.

Our critic wishes to attack this, but apparently does not wish to explain how that same hypothetical possibility would be dealt with on his own proposition of a struggle between a Socialist group on the one hand and on the other those "who . . . support . . . the continuation of Capitalist institutions" (his description in his first letter).

On the question of institutions of political power changing because of changing "attitudes" it would surely be to the point if our critic had produced evidence from history of a new class not needing to gain full or shared control of the machinery of government because of changing "attitudes"; or if he produced current evidence of such attitudes having changed and having already brought about essential changes in the Capitalist institutions of political power.

Ed. COMM.



"Surely," said those who witnessed the devastating power of the high-explosive shells, "this must make war impossible, for who would dare to use such a means of wholesale extermination. Fear of reprisals would prevent it."

But fear of reprisals did not prevent it being used, among others, by the Russian Anarchists who seized the new weapon with enthusiasm, and assassinated the Czar with it. This, and a number of disastrous accidents in factories and mines, placed its manufacture and sale under control.

Six years later, Alfred Nobel, now, like so many millionaires, lonely and thoroughly miserable, established in an office in that same city of Paris he had helped to batter down, advertised for a personal secretary for a few



days work. The advertisement was answered by an Austrian countess, who needed money because she had been cut off for marrying a journalist called Arthur von Suttner. Subsequently she went into exile with her husband, to the Caucasus during the Russian annexation. Her experiences there made her an ardent Pacifist. With her husband's help she published a book, in the form of a personal diary; an impassioned protest against the injustice, corruption, and bestiality of war.

The hero of the story is a conscientious objector, who is shot by the Germans as a French spy during the 1870 war. It was called "Die Waffen Nieder, or "Lay down the Arms." The Baroness became world famous. The book rocketed through Europe. The Third World Peace Congress in Rome elected her World President.

Previously, Nobel had told the Countess that he liked "novels with a message," "propaganda novels," so she sent him one—her own. Nobel replied that he liked the book, and sent a donation to the Peace League's funds, and a suggested "peace plan."

By this time his Head Office was in Zurich. Baroness Bertha hurried there to try to gain his full support for the Peace League. According to Egon Larsen, from whose interesting book "Men Who Shaped the Future" (Phoenix House, London), these details are culled, the following discussion took place:

Dr. Alfred Nobel: "Perhaps my explosive factories will end war sooner than your Congresses. On the day when two army corps will be able to annihilate each other in a flash all civilised nations will recoil in horror—and disband their armies."

"No! they will not, cried Bertha, for each of them will

## TWO QUOTATIONS: 1856 AND 1955

ONE of the paradoxes of this century is that while a range of pleasures and diversions, unimagined by the wealthiest aristocrat a few generations ago, is now available to the ordinary man, it gets more and more difficult to use them in the way pleasures should be used—impulsively. More and more of us possess beautiful new motor cars whose every line expresses the modern poetry of godlike, singing motion, of the marvellous escape from here, of the joyful ability to pierce the horizon-barrier and know the great earth. On some dreamlike Sunday afternoon, suddenly the whispering garden leaves and the bright innocent clouds invite us to rush, with the effortlessness of angels, out into the vast green landscape. And soon we are stuck behind an enormous thing with 84 wheels carrying a section of the Forth Bridge; we are hedged about by motor-cycle combinations containing identical families of one black-leather-coated man, one woman and one pale child; our dream dies among diesel fumes and brick suburbs."—(Paul Jennings, *Observer*, 28/8/55).

"In our day, everything seems pregnant with its contrary; machinery, gifted with the wonderful power of shortening and fructifying human labour, we behold starving and overworking it. The new-fangled sources of wealth, by some strange weird spell, are turned into sources of want. The victories of art seem bought by the loss of character. At the same pace that mankind masters nature, man seems to become enslaved to other men or to his own infamy. Even the pure light of science seems unable to shine but on the dark background of ignorance. All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life and stultifying life into a material force. The antagonism between the productive

rely on its bigger and better bombs, each of them will try to annihilate the enemy first. We, the peoples of the world, must force our governments to lay down arms."

"I wish I could prove my theory to you here and now, Baroness," smiled Nobel. "I wish I could produce some material . . . some machine of terrible power of annihilation and devastation that would make wars altogether impossible."

"It would not make them impossible Mr. Nobel, that is the horrible truth we must face. People will go on slaughtering one another, and you armament kings will increase the efficiency of their arms, because that's your profitable business."

Alfred Nobel: "I don't think a mere increase in the deadliest of weapons would bring world peace, Baroness. A few more soldiers on the battlefields will die—that's all. No, I am thinking of something more efficient; weapons that will make war as deadly for the civilians at home as for the troops in the front line."

Let the sword of Damocles hang over every head and you will witness a miracle; they will all clamour for peace.

But perhaps dynamite is not sufficient to achieve that result, even if one day it will be dropped from the air on the capitals of the world. I think we need something more powerful. Perhaps war would stop instantly if that weapon were Bacteria.

And there, for the time being, the matter was left.

Subsequently, after considerable illness, Nobel wrote the following to the Baroness in November, 1895.

"I should like to allot part of my fortune to the formation of a Prize Fund. This prize would be awarded to the man or woman who had done most to advance the idea of general peace in Europe. If we have failed, at the end of 30 years, to reform the present system of international relations, we shall inevitably revert to barbarism."

He died in San Remo in 1896. In 1953 the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Sir Winston Churchill.

HORATIO.

powers and the social relations of our epoch is a fact, palpable, overwhelming, and not to be controverted."—Karl Marx, April 1856.)

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

### Taxation and the Workers

The reasons why Socialists hold that taxation is not a burden on the workers were explained in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, November, 1950, to which C. J. Byrne and others are referred.—Ed. COMM.

### ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Box 133, G.P.O., Dublin, Eire.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, *WESTERN SOCIALIST* and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

## CAPITALISM AND LABOUR SAVING MACHINERY

(We have received the following letter from a critic. Our reply follows.—Ed. COMM.)

The Editor *SOCIALIST STANDARD*

The article, "The Automatic Factory," in current issue of the *STANDARD* is merely demonstrating that the advantage of labour-saving machinery is offset by the fact that considerable labour is required in making and installing the machine and subsequently maintaining it and the overall saving of labour is not so great as at first appears. Yet there must be some saving of labour or the Capitalist class would not introduce it.

Will the writer tell us what is the percentage of working-class labour-power devoted to producing the essentials people really need and will still need under Socialism, contrasted with the percentage of this labour-power devoted to maintaining and defending Capitalism which percentage, from a Socialist viewpoint, is sheer waste. Will he also tell us how the first percentage is falling and the second increasing with the passing years. Perhaps that overall picture, while not so big as it first appears, is not so small as the article suggests.

However, as Capitalism's powers of production are in the main Capitalism's powers of destruction, it may be instructive to compare the violence of war now with the violence of war 50 years ago when the Socialist Party began telling us that with an intelligent use of such powers of production which only then existed there would be leisure and abundance for everyone.

A Socialist's best argument against Capitalism is that Capitalism is uneconomic, an argument which seems to be forgotten by Socialists nowadays. When are you going to start fighting Capitalism and cease apologising for it?

Yours fraternally,

E. CARNELL.

As our critic says, the article showed that the saving of labour through labour-saving machinery is much smaller than is supposed by those who take a superficial view. The evidence shows that the overall increase of productivity for Britain is of the order of 1 per cent—2 per cent. a year over a period of years. If this surprises our critic it may be that he has not appreciated the point (referred to in the article) that the periodical jump for a particular industry will be much larger but it does not happen every year. The point is that firms do not scrap all their old machinery and instal new machinery each year. To do so would be a waste of labour on an enormous scale and they could not afford to do it. They must, in order to realise capital invested in the machine, wait until at least a considerable part of the machine's working life has been exhausted.

If each firm were to instal improved machinery each 20 years, with a 20 per cent. real increase of productivity, the average increase for each firm and for all firms would be 1 per cent. a year over the 20 years, or longer period.

If our critic thinks he knows of evidence that the rate of increase of productivity is larger than the figures given he should produce it. Two men well qualified to handle this problem are Colin Clark and C. F. Carter. In a recent article in the *Financial Times* (7/2/55) Colin Clark quoted C. F. Carter's estimate of a rise of productivity per man hour worked of 15 per cent. between 1937 and 1953, which, as Clark said, is "well below 1 per cent. per year as a long period rate of improvement," but he added that

his own estimate "would be nearer zero."

We are asked for figures showing how many workers are engaged on producing the essentials people will need under Socialism and how many are working at activities essential only to Capitalism. We know of no official figures published in that form or in a form from which a direct answer can be obtained. A rough estimate made in the pamphlet "Socialism," published by the S.P.G.B. (to which our critic is referred), reached the conclusion that "the whole of the nation's wealth can be produced by the male population between 16 and 60 years of age working half the time they do now." This was based on the 1921 census figures and later figures might strengthen the case, but the change is not likely to be considerable. The population, the number of workers actually at work, and total output, have all increased since then and while there are larger numbers in the Armed Forces and armaments industries the numbers in many other industries have also increased. The peace-time expenditure on armaments and armed forces has grown from about 4 per cent. of national income in 1904 to about 10 per cent. now. (See article "Fifty Years Progress, S.S. February 1955).

The Socialist case that the only way to abolish poverty is to abolish Capitalism and establish Socialism is still as true as it was when the S.P.C.B. first put it forward. It is still true that waiting on real or imaginary marvels of technical development of industry will get the workers nowhere. And it is still true that an intelligent use of the powers of production that exist would bring about the very great increase in the production of wealth indicated in the pamphlet "Socialism" referred to above.

Who are the Socialists who are supposed to have forgotten this our critic does not say. Certainly it is not the S.P.G.B., which has been putting this case for over half a century.

Ed. COMM.

## YOUR HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED

We need your help at once. For some time the cost of carrying on the Party's propaganda and other activities has been running ahead of income. One reason for this is the heavy loss we incur each month through selling the *Socialist Standard* below cost. We are reluctant to increase the price and we hope in time that with your help we may increase the sales which will reduce the loss. In the meantime we want your donations to enable us to meet necessary expenditure on the Party's general activities. Send what you can afford.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OCTOBER,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## 4½ PER CENT.

NO, this is not an article about the 4½ per cent. Bank Rate but about another item of 4½ per cent. that received almost no attention in the newspapers. It had to do with the Government's annual Blue Book on *National Income and Expenditure*, the latest issue, covering the years 1938-1954, being published the first week in September.

For readers who are unfamiliar with the subject matter the Blue Book is not easy to understand; and when not understood its tables of figures can be very misleading as is shown from time to time by Press comments on it. But some of the tables tell us in precise terms and on official authority things that otherwise can only be conjectured on the basis of part information.

Our present comment is concerned only with the extent to which the "National Income" has increased and the way in which that increase has shown itself in every-day articles of consumption, the food, clothing, entertainment, etc., that concern us from day to day.

The total National Income ("Gross National Product") is shown to have increased from £5,175 millions in 1938 to £15,718 millions in 1954, but these figures do not mean that the national income has really trebled. Almost all of the difference is due merely to higher prices. No estimate is given in the Blue Book which makes allowances for price changes, but if we apply to these figures the same price allowance as is used elsewhere in the Book (Tables 21 and 22) we may assume that perhaps the real increase of the National Income since 1938 is about 25 per cent.

It is small enough for a period of 16 years, averaging

about 1½ per cent. a year, but apologists will say that things would have been different if there had not been a war. In 1938 of course they were blaming the small increase of production on the slump and before that, on the previous war.

This increase of the national income has been obtained largely through the increase of the working population, notably through the reduction of the number of unemployed by 1½ million and through more married women being out at work.

The next thing is to find out what has happened to this increase, which as indicated above, may be about 25 per cent. Does it mean that in 1954 there were 25 per cent. more goods for everybody than in 1938? It does not mean this because in the first place much of the 25 per cent. increase does not take the form of everyday articles of consumption. Some of it goes into the increase of the Armed Forces and armaments, and the building of more factories and production of more factory machines. When we come down to articles of everyday expenditure the Blue Book provides us with an answer to the question.

It shows that, after allowing for price increase, the purchase of consumption goods (food, clothing, tobacco, rent, entertainment, travel, etc.), was in 1954 only 11 per cent. higher than in 1938. But as the *Financial Times* (6 September) pointed out, the population had grown by 6½ per cent., so that "real expenditure per head was 4½ per cent. up." This, then, is the measure of what capitalism actually performs. When, therefore, the Tory Government, as an election manoeuvre, held out the promise of doubling the standard of living in the next 25 years they are counting on something happening in the future for which there is no support in the past.

What have Socialists to say about this situation?

The problem is a purely Capitalist one and does not hit the Socialist case. On the contrary, it gives weighty support to what has always been the essence of that case. Socialists have never followed the reformist will o' the wisp of supposing that redistributing national income within the framework of capitalism is a solution. The Socialist case is that until capitalism is abolished and replaced by Socialism it is impossible to liberate the productive forces so that they can function for the benefit of mankind. With Socialism the immediate prospect opens up of greatly expanding the production of useful articles and services for mankind, above all by ceasing the waste of human effort on capitalism's wars, armaments and armed forces, and on the manifold financial and bureaucratic activities essential to capitalism but needless in a Socialist society.

## WESTERN SOCIALIST

The Journal of Scientific Socialism in the Western Hemisphere. Published jointly by the W.S.P. of the United States and the Socialist Party of Canada.

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## THE CONFUSION OF A CONFUSIONIST

W. FAULKNER, writer of a letter (3rd September, 1955) in the "Socialist Leader," under the heading of "Static Socialists," says: "I get the feeling that there is some confusion over the meaning and purpose of Socialism."

The heading "Static Socialists" is an absurdity to start with. When a non-Socialist becomes a Socialist he cannot be anything else but a live wire doing his utmost to change society from private to common ownership. Says Faulkner:—"It has always been difficult to define Socialism." If he had taken the trouble to read the SOCIALIST STANDARD and analysed the Object and Declaration of Principles he would see the difficulty exists in his imagination only. It would puzzle Faulkner to find a better definition of Socialism than the following:—

"The establishment of a system of Society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community."



"But I can never see why people want to abolish the capitalist system."

Then we are told:—"This looking backwards and asking what Marx did or some other leader, say, many years ago, is like asking, 'What did Gladstone say in 1868?'" Faulkner has got the absurd idea that looking backward is wrong. Yet every schoolboy knows by his study of history, by looking backward, many useful lessons are learned. He ought to have learnt by now that the past, present and future are linked together. If he had no grandfather or mother he would not be alive today to write nonsense. The thing that matters is *not* that Gladstone or Marx lived years ago, but are the statements still true today. If Faulkner will take the trouble to read Marx, he will see the evidence that shows how the workers are robbed of the fruits of their toil.

The changes that have taken place during the past 50

years owing to wireless, television, the motor-car, jet planes, etc., could *not* have taken place if our forefathers had not prepared the way, but these changes have not altered the fundamental *basis* of Capitalism. Faulkner shows how confused he is when he says:—"The S.P.G.B. for example boasts that it has not changed in any way since it was formed in 1904." It needs no argument to realise that the S.P.G.B. has changed over the years, some have died, new members take their places and their activities change from time to time. What Faulkner does not understand is that principles do not change. It is by analysing these principles, which act as a guide or compass to change the basis of Society; then they will no longer be needed. Says Faulkner, "It is science and improved technique that have transformed society and made possible a much higher standard of living for the workers."

To be sure there is a large measure of truth in this, but the real benefits which science has made possible can only be fully realised when common ownership of wealth takes the place of private ownership.

In his concluding remarks, Faulkner writes:—"Remember that there is nothing constant but change." Of course this is in flat contradiction with 'Static Socialists.' He cannot understand that there are things that do not change. Under Socialism, water will still be wet, fire will still burn and if he is still alive, he will have to breathe. Again, according to medical science, every living human being in one sense completely changes every seven years. That does not alter the fact, whether Faulkner used a type-writer or a pen for his letters, his fingers are anatomically the same fingers. Then there is the change that takes place after a hen has laid an egg, if left long enough the matter inside the shell changes, that splits up and divides, and for this to happen, the shell is absolutely necessary. But later the shell becomes a fetter and has to be broken to bring forth the new life in the shape of a chick.

The changes that are taking place in Capitalism today are like the changes that take place in the egg-shell, with this difference, in the one is blind matter, in the other, the Capitalist frame-work, are men and women who are becoming more and more class-conscious and realise the Capitalist shell, so to speak, must be smashed in order to bring about the change for a new basis of society. We all want to live healthy, happy, human lives. This will only be done when we have decided to abolish Capitalism and establish a class-less system of society.

J. E. ROE.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA:—  
PAMPHLET

"The Russian Revolution—It's Outcome"

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## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

**The Autumn Delegate Meeting** is being held at Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road (near Victoria Station) on Saturday and Sunday, October 8th and 9th, commencing each day at 11 a.m. A Social will be held at Head Office on the Saturday evening from 7.30 p.m. when members will be assured of a happy evening.

**Films at Head Office.** As mentioned in the September STANDARD a programme of documentary films has been arranged and will be shown every Sunday from October 2nd at 52, Clapham High Street, at 7.30 each Sunday. These films will each be followed by a short talk by a Party lecturer and time will be given for questions and discussions.

**Bloomsbury Branch** has again arranged to hold Sunday evening meetings this winter at the Forum Club, 32, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road. The first meeting commences on October 2nd, at 7.30 p.m. Owing to the fact that the Delegate meeting will be held on October 9th, it has been decided to exclude this date from the syllabus. Details of titles of lectures will be given elsewhere in this issue.

**Dundee.** Comrades Coster and Wilmot spent two weeks in Dundee during August and held some very good propaganda meetings in the City Square. In all ten meetings were held, despite the fact that our members were advised that meetings would be impossible without the aid of loudspeakers (on Sundays) as other organisations used them. With the support of local comrades, one of whom acted as chairman, very successful meetings were held, with audiences averaging 300 people at the Sunday meetings. The mid-week evening meetings were also successful. There was opposition from the Communist Party, Scots Nationalists and Labour Party supporters. Our speakers presentation of facts soon quelled their opposition. Our speakers gathered that local tradition at these meetings

had it that no questions were permitted until a speaker had completed his talk—many speakers used most of the time available by talking, leaving very little time available for questions. However, our Comrades followed the procedure usual at our meetings, and asked for, and obtained questions during the meetings which were lively and interesting. Good literature sales resulted. It is hoped that before long the Group will become another branch of the Party.

**Ealing Branch** report that branch meetings have now been resumed after the summer break, and we have a fairly heavy programme of activity before us. The first series of lectures have been arranged, and all members should by now be in possession of full details.

A visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum has been fixed for Sunday, 16th October, under the guidance of Comrade Coster. The usual social will be held in the evening afterwards. All branch members wishing to join the party are asked to notify the organising committee as soon as possible, for there is a limit to the numbers who can be taken on such a visit, and the committee must be given an idea of the numbers attending the social in order to arrange for the catering.

**Swansea Branch.** In the last week of August the branch held three outdoor propaganda meetings. On Sunday evening, August 28, Comrade Ambridge addressed a large crowd in the "Forum" near Swansea Guildhall. A religious group attempting to heckle the speaker were ably dealt with and the Labour Party supporters were easily defeated—a lucid definition of "nationalisation" and its part in the machinations of Capitalism holding the interest of the crowd. Some SOCIALIST STANDARDS were sold and back numbers were given away. Altogether a successful visit, auguring well for the future of Socialist activities in the Swansea Area.

P.H.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," October, 1905)

## T.U.C. RESOLUTIONS

THE resolutions passed by the Congress consisted in the main of the usual appeals to the Capitalists to make a few concessions to their ever humble and obedient servants, the "organised workers" of the Kingdom, and their petitioners will ever pray. Of course they will, just as the petitioned will refuse to answer the prayer until they have become convinced that their class interests demand that concessions, for what little they are worth, shall be, and can safely be, made.

There was the resolution concerning fiscal policy, in which it was declared that "any departure from the principles of Free Trade would be detrimental to the interests of the working-classes . . . and injurious to the prosperity of the national as a whole."

This was ultimately carried by 1,253,000 votes to 26,000 and alleged Socialists, prominent members of organisations claiming to be Socialist, spoke and voted for it, despite the manifestoes issued by their organisations in

which it has been rightly pointed out that under Capitalism the working-class must be plundered by either Free Trade Crows or Protectionist Kites. For those claiming intimate and first-hand acquaintanceship with the condition of the people, to talk of the "prosperity of the people" is bad enough, but what can be thought of those claiming to be out for independent and anti-Capitalist political action deliberately playing into the hands of the Liberals as they did. If the maintenance of Free Trade is of such vital importance to the working-class, then it is of vital importance that those who are in favour of altering our Fiscal System should be kept out of the House of Commons, and that those who are against "any departure from the principles of Free Trade" should be put in. The Trade Unionists are therefore bound, in honour, to support Free Traders, i.e.—the Liberals—as against Tariff Reformers—the Conservatives. No wonder the Liberal Press was so jubilant at the voting.

## NOTES BY THE WAY

## The Contradictions of Nationalism

While Capitalism lasts so will its class and international economic struggles, many of them taking on a racial, religious or nationalist appearance whenever this suits the needs of some interested group. Socialists do not support these manifestations of prejudice. But the supporters of Nationalist Movements make use of two plausible arguments. One is that it is a good thing to have a National Capitalist Group in power in preference to Capitalist rule by foreigners because the former are more progressive, and the other is that by winning national independence you get rid of preoccupation with Nationalism and thus make it easier to get down to Socialism.

There is nothing in either argument. In comparatively recent times Egypt, India, Burma, the Middle East Arab States, Hungary, Poland and South Africa, have emerged from greater or less degree of foreign rule and their absence of progress in any sense that matters, is matched by their extreme preoccupation with nonsensical Nationalism.

It has been noticed by many newspaper correspondents in India that there has been in recent years, not a decline, but a growth of Nationalism and now Indians are complaining of growing intolerance towards themselves shown in the countries of South East Asia. Mr. S. K. Patil, one of the chiefs of the Indian Congress Party, has returned from a tour of Burma, Siam, Malaya, and Singapore, "where, he said, dangerous and poisonous Nationalism, if allowed to develop, would result in intolerance for Indians and other foreigners."—(*Times*, 17/9/55.)

Nationalism inevitably has its ridiculous side because in the world as it is today the dreams and pretensions of the Nationalists (all of them, including the British, Russian and American) so frequently will not fit into the facts of Capitalism.

The Irish Nationalists may dream as much as they like about ancient myths and glories but the Irish Government is now inviting German Capitalism to come into Ireland to develop the textile industry (*Financial Times* 13/9/55) so that it can sell more in the British market; though at the same time it is "banning the import of cheap shirts from the Far East in order to protect the jobs of Irish textile workers (*Daily Express* 20/9/55). Doubtless some of the Irish Nationalists would like to live in a really Irish Ireland but in the real world they can't get the Irish to speak their own language and they need foreign markets and foreign capital, and by a curious arrangement the British Post Office publication "Post Offices in the United Kingdom" contains not only the Post Offices in Britain, but also those in the Irish Republic. With so many Irish workers working in this country the Irish Government doubtless finds it convenient to have easy means provided for Irish emigrants in Britain to send correspondence and remittances to their relatives.

## The Trade Battle across the Iron Curtain

A year or two ago there were two propaganda drives going on, one to expand British exports to U.S.A. and Canada and the other to popularise the idea that Russia could offer an attractive market for British exports.

The first has received a jolt lately since some big contracts in U.S.A. have been awarded, not to the lowest

tender, coming from British firms, but to American firms quoting higher. And, according to the *Daily Express* (1/9/55) British exports to Canada are not looking too good:

Trade men in America say that Western Germany is making an all out drive to rob Britain of her place as the world's second largest exporter of engineering goods—next to the U.S.

Main "battleground" is likely to be in Canada—where already British sales of engineering goods are losing ground to the Germans.

And it appears that Russian competition is a factor in certain lines. The *Daily Express* of the same date reported the following:—

Dumping of matches in Britain by Russia and other Iron Curtain countries has forced the giant Bryant and May match combine to close one of its plants.

The "Brymay" boss, Sir Anthony Elkins, says this morning that the Red competition is "severe."

That is a masterly under-statement. For imports of Russian matches have leaped from 72,000 gross boxes in 1953 to a current rate of 774,000 gross boxes.

For the statistically minded that is 111,456,000 boxes of matches a year.

## Religion and Morals

A favourite side argument of religionists has always been that if there were no religion moral standards would decline. While they readily admit, and indeed make a point of asserting, that the real basis of religion is "faith" not behaviour they nevertheless find it convenient to buttress the case for religion by maintaining that the two are linked and that one falls with the other.

Now some American churchmen have had to allow that events in U.S.A. do not support the argument. They say that while religion is booming "morality seems to be on the decline."

The following appeared in the *Observer* (London, September 18, 1955):—

A record increase in Church membership in the United States is reported in figures to be released this week by the National Council of Churches of the United States. It shows a total of more than 97 million, an increase of over 2,500,000 during 1954.

There are 57 million Protestants, 32 million Roman Catholics, 5,500,000 Jews and two million Eastern Orthodox Church members. Among Protestant Churches the Baptists, with 18,500,000, have the greatest number of adherents. The Methodists are second with nearly 12 million.

Whether the present "religious boom" in the United States is deeply seated in religious conviction is doubted by Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, this year's president of the National Council of Churches. In a comment on the figures Dr. Blake says: "Morality seems to be on the decline at the moment when there appears to be a religious boom. Preachers in this industrial age are finding modern man's anxiety for his job is just as acute as primitive man's for a good harvest."

## Dividends and Wages; and those who get them

As a propaganda move against wage claims, Sir John Braithwaite, Chairman of the Stock Exchange, recently issued a statement on the relative increase of dividends and wages since 1947. His statement, published in the *Manchester Guardian* (29 August, 1955) contained the following:—

The total of wages and salaries for the year ending December 31, 1954, was £9,265 millions, as against a total



of £1,122 millions for interest and dividends on securities quoted on the Stock Exchange, or over eight times as great. Wages and salaries have advanced since 1947 by 69.2 per cent. (£3,790 millions) against an increase of 32.1 per cent. (£273 millions) in interest and dividends (of which ordinary dividends constitute 39.6 per cent.). That is to say that the rise in wages and salaries is more than double the rise in interest and dividends by percentage, and nearly 14 times as much by volume.

Socialists of course are not believers in the Labour Party notion that Capitalism would be all right provided the Capitalists received rather less and the workers rather more. And one or two of the more objective defenders of Capitalism have pointed out that on the basis of the Tory argument for the free play of economic forces there is no sanctity about the division that existed in 1947 or any other year—each side gets what it can when it can.

There is, however, a useful corrective to apply to the figures. It is simply this: While "wages and salaries" cover something over 20 million workers, not to mention their still larger number of dependents, the number of shareholders is relatively a very small body. Mr. Harold Wincott, writing in the *Unilever Journal "Progress"* (Spring 1955, page 161) had this to say:—

"In this country, it has been estimated that out of a population of 50,000,000, only some 1,250,000 to 1,500,000 people are shareholders. Even in the more capitalistic United States, a recent inquiry by the Brookings Institution produced an estimate that shareholders numbered only some 6,500,000 out of a population of 160,000,000.

Of course, included in these apparently exclusive bands of investors are a relative handful of institutions—insurance companies, pension funds, investment trusts, and so on—investing vast sums of money on behalf of a great multitude of indirect investors. But the policy holder and the contributor to a pension fund do not generally speaking regard themselves as being identified with the course of stock market prices. There is a very remote and indirect link. With only three persons in every 100 in this country and four in each 100 in the United States holding shares in their own right, it is not surprising if the events in the world's stock exchanges are normally things apart from the man in the street."

#### Muddle about Socialism

The *Manchester Guardian* (17/9/55) had a leading article deploring the confusion and ill-feeling that arise because not many of us "recognise the kind of society in which we are living."

"American Conservatives are angry if told that their economy, far from being based on the free play of market forces, is almost as Socialist as the British system. The Russian Communists are infuriated if told that their Stakhanovite arrangements, with high wages for exceptional workers and coercion for the ordinary men, are less Socialist than much of the British system."

The reader will have read enough of the article to see that the *Manchester Guardian* is doing nothing to remove the confusion. Its conclusion, a masterpiece of muddle, is that "in short our system is neither Capitalist nor Socialist, but a mixture."

In another *Journal (Tribune, 16 September, 1955)*, a Labour M.P., Mr. Ian Mikardo, adds his contribution. Writing under the heading "Don't Tell Me this is Socialism," he makes the discovery that the French system of having the nationalised gas industry and the nationalised electricity industry using jointly the same non-competitive showroom is Socialism, but the English system of having them in competition and using rival showrooms is not.

Whoever it was that told Mr. Mikardo that either of them has anything whatever to do with Socialism, it cannot have been a Socialist. And one wonders what Mr.

Mikardo was telling his readers in the past when he supported the Electricity and Gas Nationalisation Acts.

According to his odd test a nationalised industry is "Socialism" if it has a monopoly. Well the Post Office has a monopoly in most of its services but Mr. Attlee long ago described it as "the outstanding example of collective Capitalism" (*New Statesman, 7/11/31*).

This is the first piece of light so far, and with its help we can put Mr. Mikardo, the *Guardian* the Americans and the Russians on the right road—that is if they want to be on the right road.

It all boils down to private Capitalism and State Capitalism and indeed on this basis and this alone America, Britain, Russia and all other countries are a mixture—but without any Socialism.

#### When will the Boom End?

The economist, Mr. Roy Harrod, set out to answer this question in the *Financial Times* (10 September, 55). He thinks that "recession" will come in the autumn of 1956 or somewhat earlier. His reasons are that the wave of expansion of factories and equipment that began about October, 1954, will be more or less completed in two years that it was excessive in amount; and that it may be found that it cannot be fully operated. He writes:—

"In 1956, we shall be faced with the problems of recession. This might merely take the form of a welcome decline of orders to engineering industry. But it might also be found—which would be more serious—that during this period of expansion we had created, in some lines at least, excessive capacity in relation to markets or to manpower available to operate it. Matters would be still worse if some recession in our export markets began to manifest itself at about the same time."

It will be noticed that though he starts off very firmly about the demonstrable fact that the 1954 spate of new orders for factories, etc., will be running out in 1956, and less firmly anticipates a recession then, he becomes quite non-committal about the other factors and indeed is not sure that he knows whether there will be factories without factory workers or factories with workers, but without markets.

He remembers no doubt the many other attempts by economists, including the advisers of the Labour Governments and the present Government, to forecast from one year to another what is going to happen.

The Editorial of the *Financial Times*, commenting on Mr. Harrod's article, is rather more definite than he is. The Editorial says:—

"He makes what is no doubt a sound case for the view that the investment boom is the major cause of current balance of payment difficulties, and then goes on to suggest that this may lead in turn to an excess of supply in the autumn of next year. The risk is a real one, but not perhaps a very serious one. In the past it has proved the characteristic of long-term periods of rising prices, such as the 1850's and 1860's, to have major booms and minor recessions. In fact, the United States has absorbed three minor recessions since the war, and we have already absorbed one."

One other point made by Mr. Harrod is of interest in view of the current argument by employers and politicians that economic difficulties are due to wage increases and "buying sprees." Mr. Harrod maintains that the excessive expansion of factories (encouraged by the Government when they ought, according to him to have been discouraging it) is the predominant disturbing factor.

"Other factors making towards inflation—wage increases of 7½ per cent.; consumption increase of five per cent.—are trivial by comparison"

H.

## WHAT THE T.U.C. OVERLOOKED

SINCE the war, and for that matter for long years before it, the British workers have been told to look forward to an era of "plenty and prosperity."

Prosperity would be ours—but for the "dollar gap," just increase output by 8 per cent. (1948) and prosperity would be ours—but for adverse balance of imports and exports—but for German-Japanese competition—we would all be prosperous if only we would work hard and harder and harder.

So it goes on with ever new threats to be met, ever new targets to be reached, ever new crises and problems while the sought-after "prosperity" somehow always manages to elude the workers.

Working overtime, wives out to work, to make ends meet, but NOW is not the time to ask for more. The "country" could not stand it.

When could the country ever stand it? NOW is NEVER the time to demand more. One of Capitalism's many paradoxes is that the workers of the various countries line-up and identify themselves with the very people who rob them. Another is that while they talk of "unfair" competition causing unemployment here they are not adverse to seeing what can be done in order to cut someone else's throat and let them be unemployed.

It seems that some British workers are so lacking in international solidarity that they are not opposed to unemployment so long as THEY are not unemployed. Of course, the same holds good for workers in the rest of the world—Capitalism has them all at it.

Insecurity of existence dogs every wage-slave's footsteps, insecurity which makes him obedient, and as word goes round of "crises" and "market troubles," insecurity it is that plays a large part in shaping resolutions and arguments at Trade Union Congresses. The fear of increased want and hardship drives workers to work harder and longer to stave off the evil day instead of finding out why they are insecure to begin with.

When one considers the effects of PROFIT production it is as a prime piece of impudence when Mr. Tiffin said "I sometimes wonder if wage claims with the lid off are in future going to be the answer to the search for a life of comfort and security." (*Daily Mirror 5/9/55*).

The Socialist Party of Great Britain's attitude to trade unionism is a clear one. While society is class-divided into Capitalists and wage workers, employers and employees, whose interests are directly opposed to each other the "collective bargaining power" of workers is vital to resist the downward pressure of the employers on wages and conditions also, whenever possible to push up wages and improve hours and conditions of work.

But even this leaves the workers who are the producers of the wealth, in a position of arguing with the non-producers as to how much they may have of it.

Our aim, while thoroughly realizing the workers' need to struggle, is to get the wealth producers alert to the urgency of looking beyond profit production to a system where the wealth society produces will be freely available to everyone.

When the means of production are no longer owned by the Capitalist class and workers no longer bargain for bones; when the wages system has been abolished and the whole community will own in common the means of production. When we contrast this with what transpires every

year at the Trade Union Congress, we can almost understand what our critics mean when they naively tell us we can't have Socialism because of "the backward countries"!

The conference this year had been softened up in advance by talk of "automation," "economic crises," and so for the "leaders" to pilot through resolutions on "wage restraint" was quite easy.

It is also easy for the big boys and the Press to scream "Communist" in order to discredit delegates from the A.E.U. or the E.T.U., but this implies that workers are really satisfied and quite happy until the "agitators" get at them. Look at this as the "motive" for a so-called Communist. According to the *Daily Express* (8/9/55) Arthur Horner was opposed to wage restraint, not because workers need more wages:—"He declared that the miners could not produce the coal the country needs because there are not enough of them." More wages—more miners—more work—more coal—more profits.

Overtime is to stay—that is as long as the employers have a use for us. The 40 hour week has been defeated and a glimpse of the future shows us "joint production" councils, "pit by pit," output probes by employers and union. And the "big brother" who may be watching you might be a union "leader" acting "in the national interest."

Ironically enough after years of Capitalist propaganda to the contrary the *Daily Mirror* (6/9/55) tells us "wages have chased the rising prices," not the contrary.

Does the addled-headedness end here? No! "Cut the call-up" is on again. Why? Are they opposed to armed Forces? No! Now it is just that "the country" needs the manpower. The employers are finding the scramble for overseas markets hard going, and just for now the cry is for more workers.

What will become of the hired hands when the dreaded crash comes is left to our memories and imaginations but meanwhile the employer has a use for us all so let's work hard, then, at least, when we are unemployed the Capitalists will have their nest egg of years of increased profit. And we on the dole-queues will be consoled by the fact that we tried. We did not ask for more wages because NOW was not the time; we worked harder and although we have nothing to show for it, we tried.

Of course the Capitalist might go to war (or rather send you to war); no unemployment then. We will all be employed in the glorious pastime of butchering one another in order that the Capitalist class of each country can hang on to or expand the wealth of which they have robbed us, the world's workers, in the first place.

So let us discuss the "German Army" question. Let us "increase output" to capture more markets and profits. Let us bury ourselves in Capitalism's problems so that this wonderful system of war-machines, crises, poverty, hunger, exploitation, and war, can continue. What is the implication of this kind of attitude? Let us not bother our heads about Socialism, its "futuristic." Why "cure" what we can "endure." This in effect is what they say.

Under Socialism when we are no longer wage-slaves and everything the world over is produced solely for use, there will be no "incentive"—and so it goes on, and if the employers' outlook on life is not that of the workers



what does it matter so long as the worker's outlook is that of employers? The curse of leadership is the blindness of those who follow and the inevitable rising of new leaders to repeat the follies of past generations of leaders. The trust and confidence workers put in leaders is

no substitute for class-consciousness and action to bring about the end of this vile system.

Leaders, political or industrial, will never do this for the workers, it is their responsibility, their only urgent problem. H.B.

## FIVE MINUTES ON SOCIALISM (Conclusion)

IN our last three talks we have discussed some of the problems of the present day world together with the attitudes and methods adopted as attempts to combat the evils of our own making. We have, in the course of 15 minutes discussion sought to point the remedy to the common ailments that afflict mankind at the present time. We have, of necessity, only been able to point at salient problems well known to all and to state very briefly the Socialist answer. In this concluding talk we would like to discuss Nationalism, of which there are many examples arising around us at the present time.

It will be evident that at the present stage of capitalist organization, the efforts of the world's governments, are towards greater protective power in the face of outside rivalry. Thus, legislation is saddling the economy of these countries into greater burdens of armament production. It is just another of the inconsistencies of capitalism that we have groups of countries combining for military strength and at the same time confronting each other, within the same group, on the commodity market; that there exists within these countries, movements, open and otherwise, striving to loosen the power of their respective governments in favour of some other set-up more in keeping with their own group interests. (Capitalism contains, of course, within its body of class interest, various antagonisms such as group interests present.)

Socialists recognise that in the world there are two classes—Workers and Capitalists—and between them lies the Class Struggle and that the liberation of the world's toilers is not a question of changing forms of government

from Totalitarian to something "more democratic" or even modifying the democracy of Capitalism where it exists in some measure. *Socialists are not concerned with making Capitalism continue more palatably but with the eradication of the world wide common system of exploitation.*

Thus, Socialists are not interested in Nationalistic "Liberation" movements of factions or the larger groupings of powers. Socialists strive for the elimination of capitalism and its replacement by a nation-less world devoid of frontiers, caste systems, religious barriers and the strangle-hold of the monetary system over the production and distribution of goods.

The S.P.G.B., being a Socialist organization in Britain, draws attention to the nationalistic movements in the British Isles—all of whom suggest various modifications of capitalism. (In Wales there are two groups, one advocating Dominion Status, the other, Republicanism). The workers of the Irish Republic are learning the hard lesson; that working class problems are not solved by Republicanism, which is simply a devolution of British Capitalism. In Wales the status of "Plaid Cymru" has been rather inflated since their increased poll at the recent General Election. This has induced many members of the Tory and Labour Party to join its ranks.

Our message to the Welsh worker is the same as that to the world working class: "Study the case for Socialism and, if convinced, join the "Liberation Movement," which really counts—the Struggle for Socialism."

W. BRAIN.

## ATOMS AND FOOD

AT the Atomic Energy Conference at Geneva, a lecture was delivered by Sir Ernest Rock Carling, Medical Research Council Advisor to the Home Office. In this lecture, he said, that "all atomic radiation had been found to be potentially injurious to living organisms, and that the vast majority of permanent genetic changes caused by such rays were harmful" (*Daily Telegraph*, 15/8/55). He suggested, however, that "the diminished fertility and shortening of the life span may not be altogether to be deplored," because world population may outrun food supplies.

There was an immediate protest by the Swedish geneticist, Prof. A. Gustavsson, who pointed out that the radiation damage did not lead simply to a diminution of the birth-rate or simple sterility; children might still be conceived, but what kind of children would they be. "... they might die in miscarriage, or soon after birth, or develop serious abnormalities such as big-headed dwarfism, diges-

tive derangements, diabetes type diseases, or mental deficiency."

This is something to look forward to in the future. It is, to say the least, a most unappetising prospect.

The destructive power of one bomb, such as was exploded at Bikini, is such that it could make an area the size of Wales uninhabitable.

It was pointed out by Dr. Richard Doll at an earlier meeting in London in June, of the Medical Association for the Prevention of War, that of 11 pregnant mothers in Hiroshima, seven bore mentally defective children. At Nagasaki, of 98 pregnant mothers, 30 received major radiation effects. Of these 30, there were three abortions and four still-births, a loss of 23%. He is, be it noted, a research worker in the Statistical branch of the Medical Research Council in London. "Peace News," 10/7/55).

There is, of course, no evidence at all for the suggestion of Sir E. R. Carling, that the mutations or genetic changes would, in fact, produce men such as Aristotle,

Leonardo, Newton, Pasteur or Einstein. The power of these radiation bombs is destructive and not constructive.

Here is a case of a man who knows his own subject but is ignorant of what is going on in other spheres of study. For example, an authority on land use, Dr. D. L. Dudley Stamp, in his book "Our Undeveloped World," points out that large parts of Canada, the United States, Argentine and Australia, do not yield nearly as much per acre as they are capable of doing. He sees the best farming in North Western Europe, whose soil is being improved, not wasted by erosion. Leaving aside the "great problem lands of the tropics" and the vast irrigation projects, he concerns himself with food production in the temperate zones. If the best methods were applied here, he considers that, without any extension of the present cultivated area, the world could feed 3,000 million mouths. If one includes the farming lands at present unused or only partly used he estimates that the food could be produced for 10,000 million people, that is four times the present world population of 2,400 millions. (*Review Daily Telegraph*, 2/4/53).

Why is it, then, that half the population of the world is undernourished? The answer is pretty obvious. Most people live from hand to mouth and have not the means to buy what they need. We live in a Capitalist world, where the cream of production goes to the class that owns, whilst the vast bulk of the population have to struggle as best they can; and above all, Capitalism is not concerned with producing as much as is required for human needs but only that smaller amount that can be sold profitably.

I.F.

### AUTUMN DELEGATE MEETING

at  
DENISON HOUSE, VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD  
(nr. Victoria Stn.)

on Saturday and Sunday, October 8th and 9th  
Commencing each day at 11 a.m.

### OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

#### SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ...	3 p.m.
East Street (Waltham) ...	Oct. 2nd 12.30
	" 9th 11 a.m.
	" 16th 12.30
	" 23rd 11 a.m.
	" 30th 12.30
Finsbury Park ...	11.30 a.m.
Whitstone Pond (Hampstead) ...	11.30 a.m.
Beresford Square (Woolwich) ...	8 p.m.

#### WEDNESDAYS

Gloucester Road Station ... 8 p.m.

#### FRIDAYS

Station Road, Ilford ... 8 p.m.

Earls Court Station ... 8 p.m.

#### SATURDAYS

Rushcroft Road, Brixton ... 8 p.m.

Castle Street, Kingston ... 8 p.m.

Katherine Street, Croydon ... 4 p.m.



## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

### GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

### SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at  
THE FORUM CLUB, 32, PERCY STREET, (TOTTENHAM  
COURT ROAD), W.1.

at 7.30 p.m.

Commencing October 2nd

(no meeting October 8th owing to Delegate Meeting).

(Subjects and Speakers to be announced)



## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP**—Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 5th and 19th Oct., 7.30 p.m., York Room Green's Playhouse.

**OLDHAM**—Group meets Wednesdays 14th and 28th Sept, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

**RUGBY**—Group meets alternate Mondays 3rd and 17th Oct., at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

## HACKNEY BRANCH LECTURE

at  
CO-OP HALL, 197, MARE STREET, E.8.  
at 8 p.m.  
Monday 10th October: "Peace and War Memorials"—  
E. KERSLEY.

## PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS

PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2  
Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

## SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.

Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist  
Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee  
at the Head Office or to a local branch.

A programme of Documentary Films will be shown at  
52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET  
at 7.30 p.m.

(every Sunday, commencing 2nd October)

Oct. 2nd Public Opinion. Speaker, R. Coster.  
" 9th The Beginning of History, W. Kerr.  
" 16th Mediaeval Village, V. Phillips.  
" 23rd The Story of Money, E. Wilmott.  
" 30th We've Come a Long Way, J. Trotman.  
Nov. 6th Man-One Family, J. Read.

## SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

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## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY** Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. (Oct. 6th and 20th).

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT** The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**BRIGHTON** Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

**CROYDON** meets Wednesday, 5th and 10th Oct., 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM AND CHELSEA** Correspondence and enquiries to Jon Keys, 6, Koppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3. Outdoor meetings, Gloucester Road, Wednesday evenings, 8 p.m. and Earls Court, Friday evenings, 8 p.m.

**GLASGOW (City)** meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Hall, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW (Kelvingrove)** meets alternate Mondays, 3rd and 17th Oct., at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to I. MacDougall, 26, Arnprior Quadrant, Castlemilk, S.5.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** Enquiries to A. D. Oliver, 13, Peayern Road, Earls Court, S.W.3. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday, in month at 1, Broadhurst Gardens (nr) John Barnes).

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. Secretary: 54, Ashdale House, Seven Sisters Road, N.4.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, D. Russell, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 4th and 18th Oct., George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. C. May, 1 Hanover Road, N.W.10.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o Head Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murtton, Bishopton. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Outdoor meetings Sunday 8 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsey, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

## LEWISHAM LECTURE

at  
DAVENPORT HOUSE, DAVENPORT ROAD, CATFORD, S.E.6.  
at 8 p.m.  
Monday 24th October: "Literature, Education and  
Socialism"—R. COSTER.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 615 Vol. 51 November, 1955

## Why Socialists Oppose the Labour Party

### MR. CROSLAND ABOLISHES CAPITALISM

### TROUBLE IN SCHOOL

### NOTES BY THE WAY

### DO IT YOURSELF

### LABOUR AND TORIES AT HOME

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4

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN is, and always has been, opposed to the Labour Party. We are often asked why. People who think that the Labour Party has Socialism as its aim cannot understand how the Socialist Party can be hostile to the Labour Party. And when we explain that the Labour Party's aim is not at all Socialism as we understand it they are still not satisfied. They say that even if this is true—how can we be opposed to all the praiseworthy and progressive things the Labour Party is trying to do; why don't we give them a helping hand?

The answer to this question lies in a difference of theory about human society, and in particular about the Capitalist social system in which we live. The Socialist Party holds one theory and the Labour Party holds a quite different one. Is

### PUBLIC DEBATE

#### "SOCIALISM or LIBERALISM?"

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN (R. Coster) v.

LIBERAL PARTY (Mr. Evans Richards, Liberal Candidate for Leyton)

At LEYTON TOWN HALL, High Road, E.10 (2 mins. from Leyton Central Line Stn.)

On WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16th

Doors open 7.30 p.m.

Commencement 7.45 p.m.

Capitalism a system of society with economic laws that regulate its working and limit the policies and actions of governments—as Socialists hold—or is it a mere chance mixture of "bad" and "good" institutions that can be improved at will by any government that wants to do so—as the Labour Party believes?

### Capitalism is a System

We hold that Capitalism is a *system*, not a chance collection; that it is based on the class ownership of society's means of production and distribution, with the working class living by selling its labour-power for wages or salaries and the Capitalist class living by owning, their income being derived from the sale at a profit of the commodities produced by the working class but not owned by them. This is the frame work within which governments of Capitalism operate, their concern all the time being with ways and means of keeping Capitalism running as smoothly as maybe so that the making of profit can proceed, for if it fails Capitalism comes to a standstill.

The Labour Party as a whole has always rejected this view. It holds that



a Labour Government can do what it likes; that it only has to draw up plans for reforms, get them endorsed by the electorate and then put them into operation. This has all the appeal of a seemingly simple commonsense, practical and direct approach to social problems; more attractive than the Socialist Party's insistence that a new and better social system can only be built up on a new foundation, that is by replacing the class ownership of Capitalism by common ownership and by replacing the production of commodities for sale at a profit with the production of goods solely for use, without either profit or sale.

The one thing wrong with the Labour Party theory is that it is false. Not that they have not tried to carry out their programmes but each measure introduced has failed to work in the way intended; and the whole lot add up to a superficial tinkering with the system that leaves Capitalism essentially unchanged and unweakened.

Nothing has turned out as the Labour Party expected it would. Hence the disillusionment and apathy rife in that Party's ranks, the growing despair of the possibility of progress at all and Mr. Attlee admitting a few months ago "We are nowhere near the kind of society we want. We have an infinitely long way to go. . . ."—(*Daily Herald*, 6/6/55.).

Let us examine the record of the Labour Party. In every field its earlier lofty aims have been whittled away, distorted or forgotten. For decades it claimed to be anti-Liberal and anti-Conservative, anti-war and anti-conscription, but it has supported two world wars as part of a Coalition Government and alongside the Liberals and Tories. It preached disarmament but built the Atom Bomb and supported the H-Bomb, and achieved the sorry distinction of being the first British Government for a 100 years to impose conscription in times of peace.

It said it would support higher wages, but was the inventor in 1947 of the policy of "wage restraint" now carried on by the Tories. It promised confidently to reduce the cost of living, but its years of office saw prices steadily rising, including the deliberate act of raising them through the devaluation of the pound in 1949. It opposed the use of troops in strikes and then used them itself and prosecuted strikers who, in 1950, struck in defiance of an old Act of Parliament.

Of course, to all these charges, Mr. Attlee would reply that he and his colleagues could not help themselves; they did not want to go to war, impose conscription, put up prices and restrain wage increases, but were forced by circumstances beyond their control. It is, indeed, true that a Labour Government that takes on the administration of Capitalism (having no mandate to introduce Socialism) has not much choice about how it does the job. To every well-meaning proposal to do something because it is sensible and in the interest of humanity Capitalism retorts that "the system" will not allow it, as indeed it will not. At the present time world markets are overshadowed by enormous quantities of unsaleable wheat and other food products held in store in the U.S.A., Canada and Australia. Since half the world's population are undernourished common sense would suggest giving it away or selling it cheaply, but the proposal of the American Government to do this was met with panic protests from Canada and elsewhere; for if the American Government gives the stuff away it will close the market to Canadian and Australian wheat and threaten ruin to farmers in those and other countries.

Because we live under Capitalism the most useful and serviceable thing the American Government could do would be to burn the lot or dump it in the sea and keep agriculture prosperous by encouraging the farmers to grow some more; until that too has to be destroyed.

There used to be a demand in Labour Party circles for "work or full maintenance" for the unemployed, on the face of it a reasonable demand, but one which is now never heard of. It was socially reasonable but capitalistically impractical, for if the unemployed could get as much as those at work Capitalism would break down.

In the matter of profit the wrong theory of the Labour Party misled them in an almost unbelievable way. They thought they could "take the profit out of Capitalism" either by limiting profits and dividends or by nationalisation. Nothing would convince them of the truth that profit is the driving force of Capitalism without which it runs to a stop. The Labour idea was as crudely stupid as to talk of taking the explosive out of dynamite or the alcohol out of whisky. In practice therefore they had to have their nationalised undertakings run on profit making lines, and had to drop the idea of abolishing profit.

At one time, too, they were all in favour of equalitarianism and the abolition of the contrasts of riches and poverty, but Capitalism, while they were in office, taught them the absurdity of supposing that you can run Capitalism on equalitarian lines (The Communists in Russia have kept pace with the British Labour leaders in the flight from equalitarianism and for the same reason).

All along the line it is the same experience. The attractive ideal of the reformer goes through the mill of Capitalist legislation and comes out as an unlovely pillar of the Capitalist system, so that the last state is no better than the one before; the unorganised private charity and workers' self help schemes of the 19th century have been replaced by the cold blooded, monster known as the National Insurance scheme with its law-enforced contributions, its mocking pretence of adequately meeting needs, its incomprehensible maze of regulations barring claims and its fines and imprisonment for non-compliance. If the reformists are not swept away by the growth of the Socialist movement the next 50 years will be spent on the campaigns of rival parties for pettifogging reforms of that reform.

As was argued by the Socialist Party half a century ago, if the Capitalist class were faced with the growth of a powerful movement for Socialism among the workers they would fall over themselves to offer reforms in an endeavour to stave off the end of their system.

As it is new evils crowd on us faster than the reformists can patch up. The unsolved and much increased problem of the slums and the millions of decaying houses (incidentally partly the result of that other reform, rent control), greets the new demand for reform of the housing subsidy reform; and after generations of trade union struggle for shorter hours and earlier retirement and against piecework, shift-work and night work the Labour Government while in office gave support to the opposite of each of these demands. One reform at present put forward by the Labour Party is the reduction of conscript service from two years to 18 months; while the Communists outbid them by supporting conscription for one year only. It was the Labour Government that made it 18 months

in the first place and then increased it to two years; and both the Labour reformists and the Communist reformists in 1939 were against conscription altogether (except, of course, that the Communists never condemned conscription in Russia).

Again we have to point out that Capitalism leaves little choice in the way it has to be administered. It is not the good intentions of the Labour Party supporters

that are at fault but their erroneous theory that they can remould Capitalist society to their hearts desire. Capitalism is a system; it can be replaced by another system, Socialism, when the majority want it, but it cannot be worked in a manner foreign to its nature. It is not growing into Socialism nor can it be made to. Those who waste time and energy trying to make it do so stand in the way of the movement for Socialism. H.

## TROUBLE IN SCHOOL

**F**EW of us have seen a jungle but all of us know, from the adventure stories we read in childhood, what a jungle is like. It is a dark, dangerous agglomeration of weird flora and horrid fauna, where the natives are permanently hostile. Fang, claw and poisoned dart lie in wait and savage, malignant creatures leap, crawl and slither everywhere, all to the accompaniment of war-whoops and gibberings.

And that, according to recent accounts, is how things are in school these days. At the same time as "The Blackboard Jungle" was first shown in this country, the *News Chronicle* (early in September) published "Jungle in the Classroom," a series of three articles in which Dr. John Laird reported on London's secondary modern schools. Five of these schools comprised Dr. Laird's jungle: they are, he claims, typical of the rest. In them, children run amok; teachers are resisted, ridiculed, even assaulted; educational standards are almost incredibly low. About 30 per cent. of the children leave school "unable to read much beyond the level of an eight-year-old child, and unable to write a letter that would be easily deciphered."

Not surprisingly, there were indignant denials. "Sensational and one-sided," wrote Sir Ronald Gould, of the National Union of Teachers; "fantastically distorted . . . absurdly untrue," the Secretary of the London Head Teachers' Association. An official of the London County Council affirmed their view; so did most of the teachers who sent letters to the *News Chronicle*. Few, however, dealt with the facts, and certainly none mentioned that Dr. Laird is not the first to have said all those things: little more than a year ago a novel called "Spare the Rod" painted a similar picture of secondary modern schooling, and wrung from the *Times* an admission that "it probably has some truth in it."

The secondary modern school is the lowest, most prolific unit in the State educational system of this country. It looks after the children between 11 and 15 who have not passed scholarship examinations, whose parents cannot afford private school fees or don't care anyway. It sets out to impart the minimum of necessary knowledge and inculcate a number of basic social attitudes. To say that is not to accuse the ruling class of conspiracy, but simply to point to what education means in any society: the equipment and adjustment of the young for what they have to do.

Our educational system has been shaped by the needs of twentieth-century Capitalist civilization, and its success is gauged by the extent to which it meets those needs. In the last few years public attention has been drawn to illiteracy almost solely on account of the conscription of boys (no-one seems to worry over illiteracy among girls,

who are not conscripted: this writer's guess—he is not without knowledge—is that it is worse). Dr. Laird says: " . . . We are still turning out from our State schools a very large number of children who in speech and writing recognizably belong to a 'lower order' "—and quotes a "typical example" from a boy of fourteen:

*Miss Rodgers backs the bred and milk the cows and mack ches and buter then she chocks the dinars.*

Dr. Laird's estimate of a semi-literate 30 per cent. is close to the findings of the Ministry of Education committee in 1948. After careful investigation, the committee estimated that among children of school-leaving age:

1.4 per cent. were illiterate;  
4.3 per cent. were semi-literate—i.e., had a "reading age" of seven to nine years;  
30 per cent. were backward readers, with a "reading age" of under twelve years.

("Reading Ability": Ministry of Education, 1950.).





However, it would be wrong to suppose that so much illiteracy is something new—a fresh outcome, as it were, of State education. While the position was better before the war, the percentage of semi-literates and illiterates has always been high; before 1914 the Army taught a large part of its volunteer intake to read from the ABC stage. Indeed, though no figures were taken then, there was probably more illiteracy 40 or 50 years ago than there is now—concealed by teachers who were paid by results.

Several theoretical reasons for illiteracy can be advanced. Dr. Laird's conclusion is that insufficient time is spent reading in the junior schools, and an American has published a book called "Why Johnny Can't Read," which blames it on changes in teaching methods. The fact remains that almost any adult can teach a child to read. Few adults expect to do so because the teachers, after all, are the experts—notwithstanding that every year there are possibly another 70,000 girls and boys who, after a decade in school, are still "backward readers."

For the truth is that the State educational system does not really work, except in the roughest, sketchiest way. It is efficient enough when it seeks out and creams off the brighter, quick-eyed children for "selective" education to fill the managerial, technical and professional jobs. But when it comes to the education of the great majority of working people, it is revealed as a ponderous, incredibly wasteful machine for securing an all-round bare minimum: an enormous open bath up-ended near a bottle, so that some at least will go in.

Teachers are not to blame (though many readers of Dr. Laird's articles thought they were). Most teachers begin with ideals; some are drawn by genuine love of children, and some are pushed in by parents who want them to have a respectable job. Their training has nothing like the length and intensity of the training for other professions. The majority receive a general training, with an emphasis on one or two "main" subjects, over two years. Of this, several months are spent in teaching practice and several months in holidays; the course of lectures in the time remaining is hardly comparable with the University training of a public- or grammar-school teacher. The educator, after all, must himself be educated.

It is reasonable to assume that there are more than a few schools where the children run riot, as Dr. Laird describes. In the past "school discipline" has been synonymous with lots of caning: perpetuated as a tradition in "The Gem" and "The Magnet" and, of course, "never did anybody any harm"—except that it has been a near-euphemism for a lot of brutality. It is this aspect of the *Chronicle* articles that has caught the public interest most of all. Most people wonder—with good reason—what has happened since the days of the school-master who

"... had several canes of various lengths and degrees of thickness. While administering punishment he got as red as a turkey-cock and occasionally rose up to give greater effect to the blows. Some boys were so frightened that they couldn't learn their tasks at all, and others so reckless of the punishment they knew must ensue that they intentionally neglected them."

The real change has been in the scope and content of popular education. As has been remarked, all educational systems serve the needs of particular sorts of social organization, and they change when those needs change. Thus the education of the ruling class of this country, which has a

different purpose from the education of the working class, has changed hardly at all in a hundred years. On the other hand there is the secondary education system of Denmark, which until the last third of the 19th century was academic and aimed at producing gentlemen farmers, and changed within a few years to a fiercely patriotic mode of training as Germany rose to become a military power.

In the early days of compulsory education in Britain, the school curriculum did not go much farther than reading, writing and arithmetic. Classes were much larger; the teacher seldom left his eyrie, and some of the teaching was "farmed out" to older children who had mastered the work. Then, as the petrol engine and the electric motor ushered in "light industry"—particularly in the south of England—in the 20th century, different needs appeared. The working day was shorter but full of new strains and tensions, factories were cleaner, leisure itself becoming mechanized; education adjusted itself by extending the field of teaching.

The process has continued, until a secondary modern school today holds a variety of subjects and activities. Girls, no longer taught housewifery in service, have classes in it at school; manual work, physical exercise and social activity—all of them directed towards specific social ends—are important parts of school life. Indeed, the architecture of schools has changed to meet this different pattern—most post-war schools rival picture-palaces in their splendourousness and beehives in their agglomerations of cells. The change is still taking place; at the present time, industrialists and economists are pressing for more and more technical training, to meet anticipated future needs.

In all this, the teacher can no longer sit at his desk demanding immobility. The activities are more personal, the work less mechanical, and the relationship between child and teacher much different. The teacher's dilemma, however, is that the world for which he educates children still demands obedience and respect for betters, and wants to see them inculcated in school. But for that, it might not matter so very much when children danced ring o' roses round their teacher, as Dr. Laird saw them doing.

The answer to these difficulties is not further reform of the educational system. Indeed, educational reformers have had their way to a large extent and not changed the secondary modern school very much (not even by changing its name) from a place where workers are trained to be workers. Most reformers speak of an educational system in which every boy and girl becomes—thus Olaf Stapledon, at one time—"a complete individual personality and a good citizen of the world." It sounds very good, but it couldn't happen in the world of Capitalism, where in fact a prime aim is to make every boy and girl loyal citizens of their own national segments of the world. And as for the complete individual personality... the supporters of Capitalism, including Dr. Stapledon, wouldn't like him at all.

The real point is to change the world itself. Education is the product of society; only a different and better society can produce a different and better sort of education. A world organized so that human beings come first will educate its children as human beings, not as prospective clerks, factory workers and soldiers. Dr. Laird's real grumble—and the grumble of his opponents—is that our schools are failing to educate them for that latter purpose.

R. COSTER.

## NOTES BY THE WAY

### More Profit-sharing and Why

The Conservative Government has given its blessing to profit sharing and we may expect to see more of it. But, surprisingly, one firm that for years has had such a scheme has now announced its termination. This is the Triplex Safety Glass Company. The head of the firm, Sir Graham Cunningham, has told the thousand hourly paid workers that the share in profits now to be paid will be the last, though the salaried staff will continue in the scheme. The reason for the ending of profit-sharing for the others is that the workers have gone on pressing for higher wages and they are now told they can have one or the other but not both.

"Successful Union pressure for higher wages has caused the management to cut out all shares in profits."—(*News Chronicle*, 15/10/55.)

Sir Graham Cunningham is quoted as saying:—

"I am a blunt fellow. I told them they cannot have their bun and eat it."

He added, according to the *News Chronicle*, "that profit sharing could be restored to the men paid by the hour if they accepted a wage cut."

The *Liberal News Chronicle*, which supports profit-sharing, thinks that Cunningham has been too blunt:—

"This is not so much being blunt as topsy-turvy. The whole principle of profit sharing is to provide incentive and loyalty, so that management and labour work with and not against each other. It means something extra in the good years, but with a reasonable wage as the background."

Another interesting comment on profit-sharing has been made by Mr. J. Spedan Lewis, founder and chairman of the John Lewis Partnership, on the occasion of his retirement. According to the *Daily Telegraph* (23/9/55), Mr. Lewis

"said last night that some profit-sharing schemes seemed to be in the nature of offering ransom. The people who ran them appeared to be offering to give up part of what they had been keeping for the sake of increasing their chance of retaining the rest."

The Lewis firm has just had a spot of bother because some of the workers have objected to the firm opening letters to the staff marked "private" or "personal"; but a majority voted down a resolution of protest (*Daily Express*, 29/55).

### The Labour Party and Cyprus

The Tory Government has declared that they do not accept for universal application the principle of "self-determination" and intend to hold on to Cyprus for strategic purposes in spite of the evident wish of the majority of the population to join Greece.

The Labour Party, now in opposition, condemns this and declares its support for "self-determination" in Cyprus.

It was not always so. When the Labour Party were in office and the Tories were in opposition, the Labour Government took up the same attitude as that now taken by the Tories. It was in 1950 that the Labour Government, through a letter to the Archbishop of Cyprus, declared that despite a plebiscite showing the Greek speaking Cypriots in favour of joining Greece

"The British Government regarded the question of Enosis (union with Greece) as closed."—(*The Times*, 24/2/50).

### Molotov Confesses

Molotov, Russia's Foreign Minister since Litvinoff

was removed when the Stalin-Hitler Pact of Friendship was being fixed up in 1939, has been made to eat humble pie in a letter published in the Russian journal *Kommunist*. He had made the statement that in Russia "the foundations of Socialism have already been built." But this implied that Socialism had not yet been completely established. He has now had to confess that this was wrong and that this "does not correspond to reality and contradicts the numerous estimates of the result of the construction of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. given in Party documents." (*Manchester Guardian*, 10/1/55.)

Thus the year-long word trickery of the Russian Communist Party goes a stage further. Their official version is that Communism does not exist in Russia but that Socialism has already been achieved. They conveniently forget their earlier publications in which, like Marx, they used the word Socialism and Communism as alternative names for the same thing. Lenin, who at that time was less mealy-mouthed gave the real name that covers the Russia system, State Capitalism.

### The Myth of Planning

One of the clever-silly notions of the reformists ever since they started trying to reform Capitalism has been that someone could plan its production and distribution. Sometimes, as at the end of last century, many of the reformists thought that the Capitalists, through trusts and cartels, would do the job. Others have thought that



Labour Governments would do it and so did the Labour Governments until they tried. The 1929 Labour Government planned a "boom" and reaped a "bust"; in the years 1945-1951, their annual plans never came out right, as the yearly "Economic Surveys" showed; and the planned production and price reductions of the nationalised industries were farcical. And either the



Labour Government planned the big rise of the cost of living that accompanied their administration (with wage rates lagging behind) or else they have to admit that their plan for a steady or falling cost of living was a failure.

The Tories have fared no better. In April the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Treasury, helped by their expert financial and economic advisers, planned the Budget for a year. But by October he had to produce a new Budget. Things had gone so badly adrift from the plan that Mr. Butler could not even wait till next April to have another go.

#### Our Ancient Scholastic Establishments

According to Dr. Kathleen Ollerenshaw, a co-opted member of the Manchester Education Committee, who has collected information about school buildings from all the chief education officers in England and Wales, about half the children attend schools that were built over half a century ago, before 1903. The number in schools built since 1944 is about 750,000, but another 750,000 are in schools built before the Education Act of 1870. The number in schools built between 1870 and 1903 is about 2,000,000.

The report appeared in "Education," organ of the Association of Education Committees and the details given above were published in the *Manchester Guardian* (23/9/55).

#### The International Wheat Plan

Of recent years the emphasis of the planners has been on international action, often through United Nations and its Agencies.

One of the fields in which there has been long experience is the attempt to regulate the production and sale of wheat in the world. It was the enormous accumulation of unsaleable wheat that was one of the outstanding features of the crisis of the nineteen thirties, and Governments and economists have gone in fear of a repetition ever since. The idea of the original planners for an international wheat agreement was to cut out the extremely violent ups and downs of prices and make the movement of prices more even without eliminating them altogether. It was supposed that production would still rise in response to a moderate rise of price and would fall when prices fell. A writer in the *Manchester Guardian* (23/9/55) in the second of two articles on the international wheat conference and the possibility of a new agreement being reached, points out that in practice this has not happened. He quotes a secretary of the pre-war International Wheat Council, Mr. Andrew Cairns, as follows:—

"An increase in wheat prices generally produces an increase in wheat acreage, but a decrease . . . generally produces an increase in direct or indirect Government assistance to wheat growers."

This is what has been happening since the end of the war and there is no chance whatever of a solution being found except that a series of bad harvests might temporarily relieve the pressure.

The result is that there is again far too much wheat for the markets to absorb.

"In the four main exporting countries—the United States, Canada, Argentina and Australia—production remained high and exports fell further; as a result supplies available for export and carry-over on April 1st, 1953, rose sharply by nearly 400 million bushels to a new high record of 2,090 million. A year later the carry-over was higher still at

2,155 million bushels, and it rose again to 2,374 million bushels on August 1st this year, despite poor crops in certain countries last season."—(*Economist*, 1st October, 1955.)

And what are the planners supposed to do for those who employ them, the Governments? Plan to grow more wheat and give it away? Or cut the acreage by force, take away farmers' subsidies and lose votes for the Government candidates in rural areas?

Capitalism is not just a system of production but a class system of society. No Capitalist industry is, or can be, interested in feeding hungry mouths unless there are full purses attached thereto. No Government does, or can, think merely in terms of producing what food they need, or of buying it elsewhere where it is being produced. Each Government has to think politically of farmers' votes, and militarily in terms of having food produced at home in case of war. The efforts of the Governments and the wheat growers therefore end up by producing one of Capitalism's characteristic contradictions—too little wheat for the world's stomach, but too much wheat for the digestion of the Capitalist market.

#### The Merchants of Death, British and Russian

Like belligerent stay-at-home politicians and parsons who send others out to be killed, the manufacturers of armaments have always been held in popular disrepute. The Labour Party, I.L.P. and Communists, for years made the "merchants of death" the target for their attacks as part of their muddled propaganda based on the idea that you can prevent war by nationalising the armament trade.

Behind it was the odd notion that while private Capitalists sell armaments, where they can, Governments do not. As recently as 29 July of this year *Tribune*, the Bevanite journal, had the following under the heading "Plain Stupid":—

"Shells bombard British ships in the Suez Canal. Who fires them? Egyptian destroyers. And who gave Egypt the destroyers? Britain."

"This is one of the brilliant achievements of the Tory Government. As a contribution to reducing tension in the Middle East, we are busy selling arms to both sides. Thus Egypt is given the privilege of buying two destroyers from us. And so is Israel."

"Likewise with war planes. Equal numbers are sold to each Arab state and to Israel."

"Here the system of fair shares breaks down. There is only one Israel. There are several Arab states. Thus we tip the balance against a new, progressive nation, in favour of highly aggressive, largely reactionary rulers."

"Does *Tribune* want more arms for Israel? Not at all. We are proposing no arms for either side. Simply that Britain should seek to apply the principles stated at Geneva instead of apparently doing her best to make war in the Middle East inevitable."

Since that was written the news that Russia and her satellites are supplying arms to Egypt and other Middle East Governments has knocked sideways *Tribune's* belief in the Geneva spirit.

We may also recall that when Mr. Bevan was in the Labour Government in 1950 that Government, too, was selling arms to Egypt and many other countries (including Czechoslovakia, which is now selling arms to Egypt). The 1950 deals were disclosed by Mr. Attlee in the House of Commons on 16 March, 1950, and were justified by him on the ground of "the need for exports," in other words selling instruments of death for profit.

Now we have the Czechoslovak Government putting forward exactly the same kind of justification; it is just "trade."

The *Daily Worker* (3/10/55) reports as follows:—

"Referring to the arms deal, Prague Radio said: 'The Egyptian Government, in the interests of security and peace in the region, has turned to where deliveries of arms can be obtained on a purely commercial basis, without political or other conditions'."

This recalls a letter written to the *Manchester Guardian* on 21 January, 1941, by the Communist Albert Inkpin, who at that time was secretary of the Russia Today Society. This was before Germany attacked Russia, in the period when the Pact of Friendship between the two Governments was still in being. Germany and Britain had been at war for nearly 18 months and some M.P.s had commented on the supplies of materials useful for war flowing into Germany from Russia. To this Mr. Inkpin replied by assuring the readers of the *Manchester Guardian* that while Russia was supplying "oil products, raw materials and grain" to Germany, they were quite willing to export them to Britain as well.

It is, of course, good Capitalist principle to sell to both sides in a war, but if the Russian Government had been concerned to stop the war they could have refused to supply either side.

There are plenty of precedents for this. History recalls the British manufacturers who supplied uniforms to Napoleon's armies.

#### The Crimean War over again?

Just over a century ago there was war between England and her Allies, and Russia nominally over the Holy

Places in Jerusalem, but actually over the effort of Russia to break into the Mediterranean and British Capitalists desire to stop it.

Now we have Russia and Czechoslovakia selling arms in the Middle East, the British Government protesting against this threat to the balance of power, and newspaper editors working up a scare about a new Russian drive to the Mediterranean and Africa—the Crimean war episode again.

Here is the reaction of the *Daily Express* (19/10/55):—

#### "Cold War Again?"

"Three months after the Geneva conference a new diplomatic war is developing, this time in the Middle East. The Russians are going all out to extend their influence there."

"First, there was the Egyptian-Czech arms deal. Now the Russians establish diplomatic relations with the Yemen, a country which lays claim to Britain's Colony of Aden."

"They are also negotiating a new trade deal with Syria. They are offering Egypt £89,000,000 or more to build a dam on the Nile."

#### "The Reason Why"

"All these moves are aimed at undermining the West's defence plans in this area. How come the Russians are able to bring them off?"

"It all stems from Britain's scuttle from Suez. If this country were still securely in the Canal Zone the Russians could never hope to establish themselves in the Middle East."

"But Britain's departure creates vacuum and weakness which Russia is now able to exploit. So the folly of scuttle is exposed. Let Britain resolve that this policy shall never, never be repeated."

H.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," November, 1905)

#### The Materialist Conception of History

All history, indeed all intellectual life, can be explained only from the accompanying and preceding material conditions, since any other theory than this postulates an uncaused thing, which is contrary to all experience, and is therefore unscientific and untenable. Intellectual life is but the reflex of material conditions. That intellectual life has a secondary reflex action upon material conditions in no way changes the fact that material conditions form the base, origin, and material of all intellectual life.

Now, in the Materialist Conception of History we are given the dominant factor in the determination of all history; that is, the method in which wealth is produced and exchanged. Obviously, in order that there may be human history two things are essential; firstly, men, and secondly, food and shelter for them. How much, where and how food and shelter can be obtained, determines, firstly, man's existence, secondly, where he shall live, and thirdly, how he shall live. Therefore the Materialist Conception of History is without doubt the determining and basic factor in all history; indeed, broadly interpreted, all material conditions are comprised in it.

The question often occurs: how is it that in identical environment some are Socialists and some are Conservatives, if economic conditions determine, in the last resort, the views of men? The matter of this "identical environment" can be illustrated by a simple analogy. Suppose a hundred soft clay balls were put in a bag and sat on, these balls would all be in an identical environment, like men in any class in society subjected to economic pressure,

so what would happen? Some balls would be squared, some slightly flattened, and some utterly squashed, as determined by their position in this so-called identical environment. In society different classes have different environment. In a given class some would be slightly modified Conservatives, and some revolutionary: as pressure increases so all would become entirely altered. All, then, would be affected, but slightly unequally, since no two balls, or two persons, could possibly be in exactly the same environment. So in society men picture the future from what they see and feel in the present. Some by hereditary fitness and actual environment would more easily and clearly comprehend the needs of the present and the tendency of things; others in conditions less violently affected would find it more difficult to see clearly, or would from the materials in their hands or inherited weakness, form false pictures which would lure them in wrong directions.

#### "SOCIALIST STANDARD" MAY COST YOU MORE

IN recent issues we have drawn readers attention to the loss on the SOCIALIST STANDARD and have asked for assistance in expanding circulation and also for donations.

Unfortunately the response has not been sufficient to enable us to meet the difficulty.

After adding circulation costs to printers' charges each copy costs more than the 4d. at which it has been priced. And as most copies are sold from Head Office at less than 4d. and a considerable number are given away to public libraries and other journals the loss has become too great to be continued. It is therefore possible that the price may have to be increased in the near future.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

NOVEMBER,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## MR. CROSLAND ABOLISHES CAPITALISM—AND SOCIALISM

The Observer newspaper has been running a series of articles on the future of the Labour Party, in which various writers have diagnosed that Party's troubles and offered remedies. Some of the articles have gone beyond the problems of organising and of attracting voters, to deal with wider topics such as the meaning of the Labour Party's "Socialism" and the requirements of the world today. One of these, "A Time for Hard Thinking" (Observer, 9/10/55), was contributed by Mr. Anthony Crosland, who sat in Parliament as Labour M.P. for five years for the South Gloucestershire constituency, and was defeated in the Test division of Southampton at the general election in May of this year. Mr. Crosland is described as an economist and former university lecturer. He is a member of the executive of the Fabian Society.

Let it be said at once that if Mr. Crosland's article is not impressive it is certainly staggering. It is staggering that one who has the opportunities possessed by Mr. Crosland of studying the world he lives in should be able to see so little and deceive himself so much.

The core of his argument is that such wonderful progress has been made in this country that the old working class economic problems are with us no more and Socialism should therefore be defined afresh "in terms of a set of social and ethical aspirations."

Mr. Crosland maintains that "the long-run problems of concern to Socialists are no longer mainly economic."

This is because:—"British Capitalism has been transformed almost out of recognition. . . . I, personally, think it rather absurd to go on calling this economy 'Capitalism.' . . ."

It was right and proper, he says, to be concerned in the past with the economic problems of unemployment, instability, and physical poverty, but not any more.

"But to-day, the economic system has been reformed, and no longer poses these traditional problems. Even with a Conservative Government we shall probably maintain full employment (if not inflation) for as far ahead as we can see, and we now have a rate of economic growth which, although not fast enough to satisfy some austere perfectionists, is certainly fast enough to eliminate poverty and sustain a rapid rise in working-class earnings. Despite the tiresome problem of the foreign balance, our present economy is capable of distributing material benefits on a scale which would have staggered Socialists only a generation ago."

As already mentioned, the really interesting thing about this sketch of a Capitalism reformed out of recognition is that it is false in almost every particular.

It reads like one of the dreams indulged in by the earliest members of the Labour Party about what they thought would take place.

Almost the only factor among these he mentions, that gives seeming support to his case, is the unusually long period of very low unemployment.

Nobody questions that the replacement of the destruction caused by the last war has played a part in this but Mr. Crosland, like many others, thinks that "full employment" can now be maintained by Government policy. As it would take us too far afield to deal here with the economic fallacies inherent in this belief in permanent full-employment it must suffice at present to remind Mr. Crosland that every boom in Capitalism's history has produced its prophets of no more slumps; not to mention the Labour Government that went into office in 1929 convinced that it could prevent slumps but which was submerged by the most prolonged depression for 50 years.

One of Mr. Crosland's points is that the old Capitalist "instability" has disappeared. If he means in this country alone (this is not clear) he would be making the elementary error of supposing that British exports could go on booming in face of an outside world in the throes of a crisis; but whether he does mean this or not, there is no evidence anywhere that Capitalism has got rid of instability. Has Mr. Crosland forgotten the sharp recession in U.S.A. in 1954, the quite acute textile slump in Britain and elsewhere in 1952, and the recent announcement in Australia and New Zealand that imports of British cars and other goods, are being cut? And did Mr. Crosland notice the "stable" way the Stock Exchange behaved when President Eisenhower's illness was reported? A Daily Mail New York representative cabled:

"The biggest stock market break since the great crash of 1929 hit Wall Street to-day—a direct reaction to President Eisenhower's illness. . . ."

"Many shares dived by \$15. The flood of selling orders raised the trading to 7,720,000 shares, the highest in 22 years. Total loss reached nearly £4,000 million."—(Daily Mail, 27/9/55.)

The Daily Herald of the same date reported "gloom in share markets"—in this country partly due to the same cause. Alastair Forbes, a regular contributor of the Conservative Sunday Dispatch had a pointed comment on this:—

"... What can one say of capitalism as a system when

the news that President Eisenhower has had a heart attack causes a panic selling wave on the stock market? . . . Even the explanation that the selling panic would never have taken place if the intelligent members of the New York Exchange, who are all Jews, had not been away for Yom Kippur, is scarcely enough to rehabilitate the system in the eyes of the watcher through the Iron Curtain."—(Sunday Dispatch, 2/10/55.)

But the chief interest attaches to Mr. Crosland's belief that "physical poverty" is no more, and that "material benefits" are distributed now by Capitalism in Britain on a scale that would have staggered Socialists a generation ago. We are compelled to ask where Mr. Crosland, the economist, got this information.

There has, of course been a very great rise in the price of everything including the price the worker gets for the sale of his physical and mental energies, but we cannot suppose Mr. Crosland has not allowed for this. What, then, is there to show for the 30 years since—say 1925?

The figures published by the London and Cambridge Economic Service show a rise of average wage rates between 1925 and 1955 of 163 per cent.; that is to say wage rates now are about 2 2/3 what they were in 1925. The L.C.E.S. also show a rise of 116 per cent. in the cost of living. Coupling these two figures we can say that average wage rates are now 23 per cent. more than they were 30 years ago. Is a small increase of something averaging well under 1 per cent. a year a phenomenon to be staggered by? Is it this that, for Mr. Crosland, has revolutionised society and abolished Capitalism?

Let us remind Mr. Crosland, too, that this very modest rise has not been a "benefit" distributed by Capitalism or by Governments, but something for which the workers have had to struggle through strikes, the number of which is now steadily increasing. This we need hardly say is the old unregenerate Capitalism with its class struggle. It should not be forgotten, too, that the workers had to fight to maintain their wage rates under and against the Labour Government, and for the four years between the starting of the new wage index and cost of living index, in June, 1947, and the end of the Labour Government the workers fought a losing battle, for the cost of living rose by 29 per cent. and wage rates by only 22 per cent.

It is true that workers' earnings have risen by a larger amount than have wage rates. This is because they are working more overtime, more piece-work and other systems of pay related to output, more night work and shift work. Are these, too, regarded by Mr. Crosland as evidences of progress away from Capitalism?

He thinks "physical poverty" has gone. May we ask Mr. Crosland what state of living it is that the unemployed, the sick and the aged enjoy on their small allowances, not to mention the several million men and women whose wage rates are on the £6-£7 level or less. Mr. Crosland is not the only person to cherish silly notions about how the treatment of the above groups has been revolutionised, but when allowance is made for the fact that the cost of living is now only just a little short of 2½ times what it was in 1938 the thing will appear in proper perspective. Just to take one item, the unemployment benefit of a single man was 17/- in 1938, it is now 40/-. Truly a staggering advance except for the fact that the purchasing power of 40/- now is slightly less than that of 17/- in 1938!

And what does Mr. Crosland make of the slum posi-

tion? He thinks that Capitalism has gone but certainly its slums have not. Mr. F. Collin Brown, chief housing and planning inspector to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, told a conference of Sanitary Inspectors at Scarborough on 13 September last that "he estimated that about one million houses in this country were beyond repair. . . . More than three million houses in Great Britain were over 80 years old, and two million-odd over a century old."—(Times, 14/9/55.)

Another thing, and this vital to the whole question of Capitalism and Socialism, is not even mentioned by Mr. Crosland, that is, the enduring vast inequality of ownership, the 10 per cent. who own 90 per cent. of the accumulated wealth. This is the basis of Capitalism, the ownership of the means of production and distribution by the propertied class. It has not been abolished, it has not been tackled. Nothing whatever has been done about it, nor could it be, except through the abolition of Capitalism and establishment of Socialism.

Mr. Crosland does not deal with this issue and until he does so he has not even begun to present an argument to support his fantastic proposition about the disappearance of Capitalism. Something he does do makes his case even flimsier. He ascribes to Karl Marx the responsibility for having originally turned attention to the economic problems of Capitalism. This, Mr. Crosland approves of, though now he thinks it has become out-of-date with the passing of Capitalism, but he also holds Marx largely responsible that "Socialism came to be (falsely) defined in terms of nationalisation."

That Socialism was falsely defined in terms of nationalisation we readily admit but not by Marx; this was the work of the Labour Party.

But above all it is false because it obscures the essential feature of the Marxist case, that Capitalism rests on class ownership.

The early Fabians appreciated this and the importance of dealing with it. The later ones, Mr. Crosland among them, faced with the Labour Party's 50 years of running way from the problem, can only offer now the bland suggestion that ownership doesn't matter after all and Capitalism has disappeared anyway.

One other thing Mr. Crosland failed to notice in his fascination for his argument for forgetting economic problems. He perceived, logically, that if his premises are correct the "economists" can be dispensed with for their job is done; but he did not notice that if Capitalism and its evils have passed away, and full employment is safe with the Conservatives, will workers any longer trouble to vote for the Labour Party or for Mr. Crosland?

## SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA:—

## PAMPHLET

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## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

**Propaganda Meetings.** With the advent of the colder weather it is necessary to curtail our outdoor meetings and as an alternative more indoor meetings are being held. In London, at Head Office, every Sunday evening, lectures are given with film illustrations and at 32, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, Bloomsbury Branch is holding regular Sunday evening lectures. These are in addition to the Hackney lecture and Paddington Branch Wednesday evening discussions. Full details of all these meetings are in this issue. Glasgow (City and Kelvingrove Branches) have also arranged Sunday lectures at the Central Halls, Bath Street, Glasgow.

**Debate with the Liberal Party Candidate for Leyton** is taking place at Leyton Town Hall on Wednesday, November 16th. Leyton Branch, who are organising this debate, ask that as many members and sympathisers as possible make an effort to attend. Full details are on the front page.

**Lunch Hour Meetings** are now held regularly at Lincoln's Inn Fields—Tuesdays and Fridays at 1 p.m. and at Tower Hill on Thursdays at 1 p.m. Party Members

and sympathisers will have an interesting lunch hour and at the same time their support at these meetings will be of benefit to the Party and will stimulate the speakers who work well to make these meetings a success.

With much regret we have learned of the death from heart failure of Comrade C. T. West. He was 58.

He joined the Party in 1924, having been a conscientious objector in the 1914-1918 war, and imprisoned for a while in the Tower of London. At various times he was in the Clerkenwell, East London and Hackney Branches, and often spoke as chairman on the Victoria Park platform in the days when Alfred Jacobs was almost our resident speaker there. On at least one occasion, too, he came in conflict with Party rules.

A quiet, somewhat reticent man, West had considerable knowledge of Socialist theory, and was always ready to discuss Party matters beside his stall in a London market. One of his great wishes—it has been carried out—was to be buried in the Highgate Cemetery: the reason will be readily inferred.

We are sad at his passing, and offer our sympathy to his widow.

P. H.

## DO IT YOURSELF!

## How to make your own Atom Bomb

**T**O-DAY almost everyone does it himself. A large trade has grown up in kits of parts which you buy in a carton and stick together. Tables and chairs, of course, wireless and television sets, garages and garden-sheds, clothing and rugs, electric fittings and all-night-burning stoves; we all buy the bits and "do it ourselves." "Save pounds" says the advertisement. Even the Book of Instructions issued by one group in this line is published in separate parts. After studying the section on "Book-binding" you buy the materials and "bind it yourself."

It is not unusual on Friday evenings to see a "City gent" (i.e. office-worker) staggering to the terminus, bowler hat and umbrella in one hand, so that the other may cope successfully with a bundle of wall paper.

This idea permits of some extension. No firm has yet put out kits of parts to build your own car or even bicycle, though "knock-downs" (cars in bits in boxes) have been exported for years.

It will probably come. So far nobody has issued instructions on how to make an Atomic Bomb which, though of moderate proportions suitable for the "little man" is still quite effective. Yet as our diagram shows the actual construction is fairly simple. The "secret" of the whole business is apparently in the "critical weight" of the two separate pieces of uranium. According to our information about 3lbs. of refined uranium should be sufficient. It should be clearly understood that we are not supplying kits of parts, neither can we give addresses of firms supplying materials. Nor can we accept responsibility for accidents. Our information is culled from "Achievements of Modern Science," by A. D. Merriman, Gregg Publishing Co., 1949.



We would emphasise that although the atom bomb is the trigger for the modern hydrogen bomb, the latter is quite beyond the capacity of the ordinary home constructor, however enthusiastic.

According to the statement published by Bertrand Russell, Albert Einstein, and other scientists, while the atom bomb "only" obliterated Hiroshima "no one knows how widely such radio-active particles might be diffused, but the best authorities are unanimous in saying that a war with H-bombs might quite possibly put an end to the human race" (*Evening Standard*, July 9, 1955).

Therefore we do not see that any objection can be raised to a small weapon of the type we have mentioned. Those numerous "Pacifists" who are not against wars fought with old-fashioned weapons but only against large

atomic missiles; all the supporters of the Russian disarmament schemes which propound the limitation of only those arms in which Russia is deficient; cannot logically object to a small home-constructor's effort, which, compared to the tests now opening craters in the sea-bed, is only kid-stuff.

Neither can we see how people who support "Peacetime" Capitalism with its fantastic road casualties alone, which regularly exceeds one million a year in one country, the U.S.A., can really care whether people make their own bombs or not. These could never compete with the most lethal weapon of modern times, the motor-car in the hands of a harassed and worried driver.

In the first flush of the Socialist Movement the idea of the "Citizens Militia" was popular. It was a hang over from the days of the National Guard in France when workers could buy cannon and maintain them at their own expense. The scheme was that each citizen kept his own weapon in readiness at home. Perhaps the next

Labour Government could revert to this; instructing each "Z" class man to report with his birth certificate and home-made atomic bomb all ready, thus making considerable economies in Defence Expenditure. We make no charge for this suggestion. The Labour Party badly needs some.

Finally may we urge those desirous of undertaking private research in nuclear physics in the garden shed (after all, the Curies discovered radium in a derelict shed) to see that their personal papers are in order. Bequests donating money or property to the Socialist Party of Great Britain should be drawn up by a qualified solicitor, who will also supply the necessary Government stamp.

On the other hand, perhaps it might be better to send a smaller donation, and remain alive to advocate Socialism. Work of that sort will eventually produce a Socialist Society where atoms will be controlled by intelligence.

HORATIO.

## LABOUR AND TORIES AT HOME

**T**HE annual conferences of the two major parties were studies in political contrast. For the Tories it was a splendid spectacle—a jamboree of quietly exulting hearts.

For Labour it was a half-hearted acceptance that "there is something rotten in the state of Denmark," a reluctant realisation that Nationalisation is no well-seasoned Socialist plank but a worm-eaten structure full of bureaucratic dry-rot over which the paint of 80 years' propaganda has worn very thin.

Now a three year policy committee is to be set up to try to substitute new planks for old. There will, of course, be much hammering and sawing by the party chippies and at the end a bag of political sawdust and shavings.

The Conference chairman, Dr. Edith Summerskill, began the proceedings with a diagnosis of the ills of the body politic. She discovered the Tory Chancellor as the malignant cause. One felt, however, that her forceps were not so anti-septic as they might have been. The Labour Party do not like Mr. Butler, not because of his blue blooded origin, but because of the pink Fabianism he adroitly puts to the Tory cause. Now the Conservative front bench has taken to importing back room boys, Mr. Butler, with their aid, has devised vote-catching policies and captivating slogans. He appears a shrewder and more imaginative politician than his Labour counterpart Mr. Gaitskell, one of Labour's bright boys, who has taken a degree in something.

Dr. Summerskill also lamented the fact that the Labour Party has lost its emotional appeal for youth. She said they now take full employment for granted and even want something more. In short, the Labour Party are unable at present to exploit the fear of mass-unemployment. She added that Labour used to think work was synonymous with happiness. While it may be true to say that to be out of work is to be unhappy it does not necessarily mean the converse is true. Dr. Summerskill, it seems, is mildly astonished to discover that because a youth may earn his own living it does not follow that "his cup runneth over."

Indeed, the very work which Dr. Summerskill once thought was synonymous with happiness can itself be a source of industrial frustration and as pernicious in its effects in one way as unemployment is in another. One has only to think of the large number of youth working on semi-automatic processes. The routine and drudgery often involved in junior clerkships. The thousands of boys and girls in blind-alley occupations or the soul destroying tasks of many unskilled occupations; or even the gap between what career examinations so often promise and what they actually yield. All of which is perfectly consistent with a system based on costs and profits.

To work is one thing. To earn a living is Capitalism's distorted version of it. "To work for money," said Marx, "is not really to work at all." It still remains a major indictment of Capitalism that it cannot effectively gear the creative capacities of men to the productive processes. Perhaps because many of the industrial young lack a productive outlet they seem deficient in social outlook, and seek relief from the treadmill of aimless work in the treadmill of aimless leisure.

The Tories claim, however, to attract more to their youth organisation than does the Labour Party. This may merely signify that young suburbia places a greater prestige value on a half-pint drink in the local Conservative Club than in the local boozer or Working Men's Institute. The Labour Party is, however, setting up a new youth organisation to compete with the Tories in catching 'em young.

Strangely enough, it was Gaitskell whom his rival Bevan once contemptuously called a desiccated calculating machine, who made the biggest emotional impact on the Labour Conference by himself emotionally announcing that "he was a true Socialist." This public avowal of faith, the first it seems he has made, earned him the biggest ovation of the Conference. It might earn him the party leadership from the discredited Bevan and the ageing Morrison.

And of what did this public avowal of true Socialist faith consist, which wrung the heart of Mr. Gaitskell and the withers of the Conference? It was that vague inno-



cuous tenet that has done service for every political creed—"Equality of opportunity." Mr. Gaitskell, however, further qualified it by adding, "reward should go to work and merit and not to wealth and position." Here was the authentic voice of the Intelligensia who believe that the division between intellectual and manual labour is an eternal dispensation. Such "equality of opportunity" would exclude any opportunity for equality.

Bevan, as usual, was "full of sound and fury signifying nothing." While the Bevan demands for bigger and better doses of Nationalisation earn support from the constituent Labour Party, it is against the political trends of the time. Moreover, words like Public Ownership, Workers' Control and even Nationalisation, are becoming political swear words, offensive to the delicate ears of sober Labour leaders and eminently respectable T.U. chiefs.

The last-named regard Bevanism as a disease, whereas it is merely a symptom. No doubt the Labour Party strives to have differences with the Tories but its net effect is to produce differences within itself which militate against it being an effective political whole. Thus the price of some permanent difference with the Tories would be the price of a permanent split; clearly an impossible situation. Yet for the Labour Party to be free of splits would be tantamount to declaring itself politically redundant. That is its perpetual dilemma. Because the Labour Party is part of an established two party system in a monolithic political structure its internal weaknesses are a matter of concern for Labour and Tory alike. The Labour Conference gave no sign that they would be remedied.

Tory Conferences are never complicated by attempts at policy making. Every delegate is deeply aware of his political station in life to which it has pleased the Conservative Central Office to call him. Only the Leader makes policy. To question it would be sacrilege. The Leader in his wisdom does of course delegate power to eminent colleagues and consult High Finance and Big Business.

Following the Churchillian precedent, Mr. Eden was not present at Conference proceedings. On the last day, however, he turned up and made a moving speech. Leaders on such occasions always make moving speeches. The Conference usually opens with a prayer, then the annual platform pep talk from the Conservative Elders, followed by well prepared speeches from the Conservative young and closes with a moist-eyed, deep-throated rendering of "Land of Hope and Glory."

## NATIONALISATION: A Solution for the Disillusioned

**T**HE decision of the National Coal Board to close Brynhenllys Colliery has cast a shadow over the mining valleys of South Wales. "Last Friday 193 miners received notice to finish work on August 26th. The previous day the N.C.B. accused men of "indiscipline." (*South Wales Evening Post*, 16/8/55).

Many of the people in the mining districts of South Wales supported nationalisation of the mines, believing it would solve their economic troubles. They did not and still do not understand that nationalisation is no different from private ownership insofar as it is still Capitalism. But now many of the miners from the colliery in question

Nevertheless, the modern Tory Party, unlike their rivals, present a suave facade of party unity. There may be dissensions but they are conducted in well-bred, modulated voices. Deep down there may be fierce jealousies and rivalries but they scarcely ruffle the silken surface. Even when Churchill, old, arrogant and overbearing, became an embarrassment to the Tories there was no strident "Churchill must go" campaign. People who pricked their ears caught faint murmurings but no one heard distinctly, for the Tory door was shut and the windows closed. Just as when Butler, who blotted his copy book at Munich, lost out to Churchill's white headed boy, Eden, for the premiership, no one yelled—"we wuz robbed." While the Tories divide they never split.

After the crushing defeat of the Tories in 1945 many said "they were sunk." The same view was held in their 1906 debacle. But the Tories have a strong survival instinct. Quietly, efficiently, they salvaged the craft, gave it a coat of new paint and refloated it. Also they were able to cash in on their opponents' mistakes and the disappointment Labour's terms of office brought. The tide turned. People, who in 1945, voted against old Toryism began to vote for "New Look" Conservatism. In 1945 the Tories' greatest liability was their pre-war domestic policy. In 1955 the Labour Party's greatest liability is their post-war record.

The Tories are supposed to be traditionally stupid, a myth probably self-perpetrated to their own advantage. Actually they are shrewd and flexible politicians. "Dishing the Whigs" is as adroitly practised by them as it was by Disraeli. Because they are the traditional representatives of wealth and property, they regard themselves as the rightful rulers of the realm. The difference between them and the Labour Party is that Labour believes it can govern. The Tories know they can.

As for the Welfare State it is much more Tory "Socialism" than Labour "Socialism". Long ago Industrial Feudalism was a Tory ideal, where workers would have "rights" as well as duties. Indeed the New Welfare State is only old Tory reformism writ larger. While it may have features not wholly satisfactory to the Tories it is the current expression of their age-long political paternalism. While circumstances may make them modify it here and there they will keep its main structure unimpaired.

At present they seem to have a decided political edge on their rivals. Only the possibility of a slump, it appears, can boom Labour's falling stock.

E. W.

have openly stated they preferred the conditions operating under private Capitalism. Here then is a clear and sad picture of the confusion in the minds of workers everywhere on the question of "nationalisation."

As Marx pointed out in "Value, Price, and Profit," "Capital presupposes wages; and wages presupposes capital; one cannot exist without the other."

So the existence of the Capitalist system presupposes the wages system; wherever this exists, Capitalism exists. All that happens under nationalisation is that capital, instead of remaining in the control of private individuals, passes under the control of the State; it becomes cen-

tralised. But the Capitalists do not lose by this move, rather do they gain; for what greater security can one have than State bonds. All they now have to worry about is the economic stability of British Capitalism as a whole. Even if all the collieries closed down, they would draw their interest. In Russia, in China, in America and Great Britain, and in almost every other part of the world, Capitalism operates either as State Capitalism or as private enterprise.

If the workers of the world will only stop and think about these things, instead of allowing themselves to be led up the garden path by leaders of any variety, they will realise the solution lies with themselves, and not in trusting to leaders. They will vote for the abolition of Capitalism and the wages system, and introduce a system of society based on common ownership of the means and methods of production and distribution by and in the interests of the whole community; irrespective of race, sex or colour. Goods will be produced for use and not for sale; there will be no buying, no selling, no trade and no barter; the money system will finish in its entirety. Man will then have proved that he is civilised. There will be no war for there will be nothing to have wars

about, since things will be commonly owned. There will be no stealing; for what man will steal from himself. All our ideas of ethics and morality will change; because the laws operating under minority rule are related to property. A man's wife is his property in law, just as much as his lawn mower. Under Socialism men and women will be equal; the only bonds will be bonds of affection. There will be opportunity for each to follow the occupation of his or her choice. Opponents of Socialism say human nature won't allow it to work; when what they really mean is "human behaviour." People will not behave in the crazy way they do today; after all because there is plenty of water in the tap we do not leave it on all night. In the same way when Socialism becomes a fact people will not hoard things up. Why should they? since they can have as much as they want anyway. They will not refuse to work since work will not be as it is today, everything will be done for the benefit of man; conditions of work will be different from now, since there will be no bosses; there being nobody to boss for. In short, a sane people will see the necessity for Socialism and so they will behave in a sensible way. For the first time in history they will be able to control their destiny.

PHIL MELLOR.

## THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

**W**HEN Karl Marx formulated the Materialist Conception of history he gave us a key to unlock the door to a chamber of horrors—the sordid basis of high-flown sentiments. He showed that, since the passing of tribal society, history had been a record of the struggles of different classes to control the social wealth; that the grouping into classes originated out of the way wealth was produced and distributed in each period; that the shape of the main ideas of a period can only be explained by the economic conditions of the time. Further, that class struggles will only disappear when clashing interests have been reduced to one interest; that is when all forms of private ownership in the means of production have been replaced by the common ownership of the means of production. Thus society was shown to be subject to the general law of evolution, though the artificial environment with which man has surrounded himself makes differences in the particular way the law operates in human society as compared with the animal world.

Before Marx's time history appeared in a fortuitous light; as the operations of Gods or devils, heroes or scoundrels, clever men or fools or knaves. The Materialist Conception of History made clear that history was a natural development in accordance with certain definite laws; that it consisted of a chain of fundamental changes in which each new epoch sprang out of the previous one but with a different economic base, a different grouping of classes, and a corresponding difference in the general outlook of the time.

This does not mean that each epoch produces a completely new set of ideas. Old ideas are modified by the new mould and some fresh ideas are developed. For example sporting contests of all kinds have existed for as long as there are any records, but sham-amateurism is a product of modern commercialised sport.

Likewise similar economic circumstances produce similar ideas and similar solutions, even though thousands of years may intervene. This accounts for the fact that many things that appear to be the special product

of modern times have, in fact, been thrown up at different times in the past; like the grain dealers of Athens who were prosecuted for black-marketeering or the nationalization schemes of Xenophon two thousand years ago for the purpose of increasing Athenian revenues, or the Government of Ferrara in the 15th century which bought and distributed corn as well as monopolising fish, salt, fruit meat and vegetables. Of course none of these operations were described at the time as Socialistic. That could only occur in a Capitalistic society where supporters of Capitalism wished to throw up a barrier against revolution, or bankrupt reformers needed to delude their followers into believing that they had found the road to comfort and security.

In spite of "full employment," gambling on the pools, and T.V. sets on the hire system, sooner or later the mass of the population, those who are compelled to work for a living, will be driven by their material interests to set about abolishing the private ownership of the means of production and replacing it by the common ownership of the means of production. In other words, converting all that is in and on the earth into the common possession of all mankind. And this will be in accordance with the Materialist Conception of History's own decree and in spite of the delusionists' conceptions.

GILMAC.

## A QUOTATION

"Two contrary laws seem to be wrestling with each other nowadays: the one, a law of blood and death, ever imagining new means of destruction and forcing nations to be constantly ready for the battlefield; the other a law of peace, work and health, ever evolving new means of delivering man from the scourges which beset him."

"The one seeks violent conquests, the other the relief of humanity. The latter places one human life above any victory; while the former would sacrifice hundreds and thousands of lives."

LOUIS PASTEUR. In 1888.



## "THE WELSH REPUBLIC"

(Published by the Welsh Republican Movement, Cardiff)

Some while ago the SOCIALIST STANDARD printed an article exposing the policy of the Welsh Nationalist Party. Recently there has come to our notice a pamphlet printed by a group known as "The Welsh Republican Movement." We find, on reading, yet again a somewhat familiar dressing for the same old wound—Capitalism—though dressed in somewhat different phraseology.

The pamphlet begins by criticising the Labour Party (emphasising the prefix ENGLISH Labour Party) and explains that whilst it began its growth on sound Socialist ideals including self-government for Wales, it has dropped its early Republicanism for Monarchy, the symbol of class society. This sounds very nice to the Welshman with a grievance (and who hasn't?) but is really very naive to those who know something about the Labour Party. The Labour Party never was an ENGLISH party, being composed of representatives of the four nations of the British Isles. Its policy has never been Socialist whatever its ideals may have been.

To say that Wales is governed by "English Concepts" (page 3) asks us to enquire "What are English concepts?" Wales, like Scotland, England and Ireland, is governed by "Capitalist Concepts" which bear equally hard on the workers of these respective countries. Of course, there are spasmodic periods when the workers of one part of Britain are relatively better or worse off than those of another area, due to fluctuations of capital investment. At the moment, S. Wales is in the main "enjoying" a boom period in tinplate.

We are also told that England has imposed its Monarchist tradition on an "innately democratic people" (page 3). The Republicans have obviously written their own history book here. The Wales that was conquered and finally integrated with Monarchist England was herself the Wales of the Princes; indeed, to the patriotic Welshman, the finest chapter in Welsh history was the last great insurrection for independence led by Owain Glyndwr, prince of ancient lineage and doyen of the Welsh of his time.

The structure of Welsh society changed in the same manner and from the same causes as existed everywhere else. To talk about the "old classless society of the Welsh Nation" is utterly wrong. The Welsh Nation began on a class basis as did other nations.

With the revolt of the Roman Magnus Maximus and the disintegration of Roman Britain, leading families took over "trwy ganiatâd y Rhufeinig" (by permission of Rome) as the old historian Carnhuwanawe states in "Hanes y Cymru." Maximus represents the figure from which flowed the river of the nobility by whom Wales was ruled until the Conquest. The transition to Feudalism of the English pattern was a relatively simple matter in a land where there had already existed for centuries a class society composed of Kings and Princes (Breninocedd a Tywysogion), lords and gentry (Arglwyddi a boneddwr) and a slave class (caethion).

Not only are the Republicans wrong in appealing to the Welsh as "an innately democratic people," but they ignore the fact that in modern Wales the Caethion (slave class) is for the first time a Majority Class—as wage slaves to Capitalism.

What are the positive points in the Republican pamphlet? There aren't any. There is a 12 point manifesto at the end containing generalities, obviously intended to tickle the patriotic palate, e.g., that the monarch of England shall have no jurisdiction over the Welsh Nation (point 2). The pamphlet contains nothing even mildly anti-Capitalist except for opening with a tirade against the Labour Party and closing with a condemnation of Toryism. This is, of course, merely criticism of the manner in which these parties have conducted the system.

The Welsh industrial worker, like his comrades all over the Capitalist world, has been forced from time to time to rebel against the insufferable conditions imposed by Capitalism. The history of the coalfield provides ample proof of this. It is to such people that we of the Socialist Party speak.

Wales can achieve, along with the workers of all countries, the victory which will end for all time the exploitation of man by man. The history of the future will tell of the final assault and triumph of humanity over slavery and humiliation and the world will be the inheritance of the people as a whole.

The voice of the Socialists in Wales is a small but a constant one. All parties are in opposition to it but it persists. It will continue to expose those who, under the guise of liberators, continue to mislead the working class, included in this category being the Republican Movement.

W. BRAIN.

## THE SENTIMENTAL SOCIALIST

THE sentimental Socialist, though not necessarily Christian, retains essentially the introspective attitude of the Christian ethics. He forms societies, the members of which are supposed to pledge themselves to indefinitely high aims, aims that tower above the clouds from which it requires the practised eye to distinguish them. These aims 'won from the void and formless infinite' seem to be won only for the sake of being handed over to the equally formless indefinite. The only shape approaching articulation into which they wreath themselves, is that of resolutions and letters. The

young people of the well-to-do middle-class, for whom sentimental Socialism possesses attractions, think human nature susceptible of higher aims than the current ones, and meet in drawing rooms for the apparent purpose of passing resolutions to that effect. The sentimental Socialist desires above all things to be broad and comprehensive. Now any proposition conveying a distinct meaning is necessarily limited by that meaning; and must be taken to exclude its opposite, and a fortiori the society adopting it to exclude those who hold its opposite. But how can a society whose aims are so high, condescend

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

### GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

### SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at  
THE FORUM CLUB, 32, PERCY STREET (TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD), W.1.  
at 7.30 p.m.

Nov. 6th] Enquiry in the Docks, C. Kilner.  
" 13th Socialism and the Call up, H. Baldwin.  
" 20th Knowledge, Education and Opinion, R. Coster.  
" 27th " R. Ambridge.  
Dec. 4th Peace and Peace Memorials, E. Kersley.

to such small matters of detail as meaning? How can a man as Catholic as the 'Brother of the Higher Life,' or the New Atlantis Society, be so narrow as to exclude any one. Hence in the resolutions adopted by such associations, the first requisite is the absence of meaning. All is possible in the man (or woman) who aims high enough. Danton's motto 'to dare, to dare, and again to dare,' becomes in the hands of the sentimental Socialist, 'to aim, to aim, and again to aim' at an ineffable O—Voilà tout. All this 'casting of empty buckets into empty wells and drawing nothing up' may be entertaining, beautiful, ennobling for a short spell, but palls after a time, which is probably the explanation of the fact that the societies that start so rosy bright invariably die of inanition within measurable distance of their inauguration, though only to make way for new ones. The young men and women of our blasé middle-class civilisation require a stimulus; this stimulus may be aesthetic, philanthropic, or social. It may consist in languishing vapouring on art, on improved dwellings, on social reconstruction. Just now it wears the latter aspect. The whole movement is born of the morbid self-consciousness of our Christian and Bourgeois civilisation run to seed."

E. BELFORT BAX  
(Today, March 1884.)

### WESTERN SOCIALIST

The Journal of Scientific Socialism in the Western Hemisphere. Published jointly by the W.S.P. of the United States and the Socialist Party of Canada.

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East Street (Walworth)	Nov. 6th	11 a.m.
	" 13th	12.30 p.m.
	" 20th	11 a.m.
	" 27th	12.30 p.m.
Finsbury Park	...	11.30 a.m.
Whitstone Pond (Hampstead)	...	11.30 a.m.
Beresford Square (Woolwich)	...	8 p.m.
WEDNESDAYS		
Gloucester Road Station	...	8 p.m.
FRIDAYS		
Earls Court Station	...	8 p.m.
SATURDAYS		
Castle Street, Kingston	...	8 p.m.
Katherine Street, Croydon	...	4 p.m.
LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS		
Lincoln's Inn Fields, Tuesdays and Fridays	at 1 p.m.	
Tower Hill	Thursdays	at 1 p.m.



## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP**—Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 2nd, 16th and 30th Nov., 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**EDINBURGH**—Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 36, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh.

**OLDHAM**—Group meets Wednesdays 9th and 23rd Nov., 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

**RUGBY**—Group meets alternate Mondays 3rd and 17th Oct., at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

## HACKNEY BRANCH LECTURE

at the  
CO-OP HALL, 197, MARE STREET, E.8.  
on Monday, 7th November, at 8 p.m.  
"The Catholic Church", R. Coster.

## PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS

"THE HARCOURT ARMS,"  
32, HARCOURT STREET, W.1.  
(Off Marylebone Road, near Edgware Road Station)  
Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

## SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.

Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist  
Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee  
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A programme of Documentary Films will be shown at  
52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET  
at 7.30 p.m.

(Between Clapham North and Clapham Common  
Tube Stations)

Nov. 6th Man—One Family, J. Read.  
" 13th Can We Be Rich, Liza Bryan.  
" 20th Approach to Science, F. Warlow.  
" 27th Food for Asia, J. D'Arcy.  
Dec. 4th The Peoples' Charter, Helen Rose.  
" 11th Pop Goes the Weasel, R. Ambridge.

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## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY** meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. (Nov. 3rd and 17th).

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT**. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

**CROYDON** meets Wednesday, 2nd, 16th and 30th Nov., 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM AND CHELSEA**. Correspondence and enquiries to Jon Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3. Outdoor meetings, Gloucester Road, Wednesday evenings, 8 p.m. and Earls Court, Friday evenings, 8 p.m.

**GLASGOW** (City) meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW** (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 7th and 21st Nov., at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to I. MacDougall, 26, Arnprior Quadrant, Castlemilk, S.5.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shee, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** Enquiries to A. D. Oliver, 13, Penywern Road, Earls Court, S.W.3. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday, in month at 1, Broadhurst Gardens (nr) John Barnes).

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. Secretary: 54, Ashdale House, Seven Sisters Road, N.4.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, D. Russell, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 1st, 15th and 29th Nov., George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.: Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. "The Harcourt Arms," 32, Harcourt Street, W.1. (off Marylebone Road, near Edgware Road Station). Discussion after Branch business.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o Head Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** Communications to Secretary, Dick Jacobs, c/o 13, Waterloo Place, Brynmill, Swansea, Glamorgan.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

GLASGOW (CITY AND KELVINGROVE) BRANCHES  
SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at  
CENTRAL HALLS, BATH STREET, GLASGOW  
7.30 p.m.

Nov. 6th Machines and Men, J. Richmond.  
" 13th Lest We Forget, B. Webster.  
" 20th Abolition of Freedom, E. Darroch.  
" 27th Wages and Prices, T. Mulheron.  
Dec. 4th The Russian Revolution, A. Shaw.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## CONTENTS

No. 616 Vol. 51 December, 1955

### Mental Illness in a Changing World

#### THE CIVIL SERVICE ROYAL COMMISSION

#### FIFTY YEARS AGO

#### CHINESE OPERA

#### BOOK REVIEW

#### THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND SOCIALISM

Registered for transmission to  
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

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A FEW YEARS BEFORE the last war a young doctor took over a practice in a London suburb. He was a smooth man, plump as a schoolboy and urbane as any house-agent's clerk; painstaking and efficient. His reputation spread and his practice flourished. Yet he has recently lost many of his patients to a partner who joined him a few years back. The significant fact about this partner is that he came fresh from experience in a mental hospital and when examining his patients' physical ailments he never forgot to probe their mental upsets.

A few dry-as-dust statistics will show that this attitude of the partner towards his patients is not unreasonable. The Mental Health Research Fund recently stated that 10 to 20 per cent. of all who consult their general practitioner suffer from some neurotic condition rather than a physical illness. More than a quarter of industry's absenteeism is due to some form of mental illness—which exceeds the common cold. The Medical Officer of Health for Salford has said that one baby in every 19 will spend some time in a mental hospital and that one in 12 will one day suffer a mental breakdown.

#### Psychosomatic Diseases

Apart from the purely mental complaints, the psychosomatic illnesses—more easily known as physical disorders which are caused by mental upset—have become disturbingly common since 1939. A million men in Great Britain suffer from peptic ulcers, which are said to be mainly the result of emotional and constitutional disturbances; large employers such as the G.P.O. and London Transport find these ulcers to be the commonest form of prolonged ill-health among their staff. Coronary thrombosis is another psychosomatic disease; deaths from this have increased frighteningly. Coronary diseases were responsible for 37,000 deaths in 1947—by 1951 this figure had swelled to 58,000.

It is thus not wonderful that the mental hospitals are so busy. The Hospitals Year Book for 1954/5 states that of about 482,000 hospital beds in England and Wales nearly 142,000 are occupied by cases of mental illness—later reports suggest that this figure is, if anything, rather an underestimation. The Ministry of Health Board of Control reports that in 1954 mental hospitals were overcrowded to the extent of 18,932. According to the *Manchester Guardian* (31/10/55) a recent article in the *Lancet* on mental hospitals made them sound more like concentration camps, with underfed inmates and nurses struggling to keep charge of as many as 100 patients apiece. The Board of Control comments in an earlier report that "The steady increase in the number of admissions to mental hospitals does not appear to be the result of any gross increase in the incidence of nervous and mental illness in the general population . . ." but is due to the fact that " . . . old prejudices



are dying and there is an acceptance of treatment in hospital where it is available. . . . Whether or not that is true, it is sobering to reflect that we are yearly setting up records in mental hospital admissions, despite over a century's development of knowledge and experience in treating diseases of the mind.

#### Ignorance and Cruelty

The care and treatment of the mentally ill was cruelly neglected until well into the 19th Century. The insane were thought to be possessed of a demon and fully responsible for their actions. Consequently their treatment was harsh in the extreme; they were heavily chained, beaten and tortured. The madhouse attendants were ignorant and corrupt brutes who cared nothing for their charges' well-being and often left them confined for days in their own filth. Chillingly suggestive was the remark of one visitor to a madhouse, who, when asked whether the patients he had seen were men or women, could only reply, "Women, I think, but I am hardly certain."

One of the most famous of the early madhouses was Bethlehem, or Bedlam, which stood in London on the site now occupied by the Liverpool Street Station. Here were scenes of sickening uproar and confusion, which gave the word "bedlam" to the English language. For a penny or twopence any sufficiently sordid London citizen could watch the antics of Bethlehem's inmates, one of whom for example—although apparently quite sane and rational—was confined in an iron apparatus for nine years, and released only to quickly die of advanced tuberculosis. In the White House at Bethnal Green thousands of bugs paraded the walls at night and 30 or 40 rats at once squirmed over the gangrenous legs of the patients: yet a House of Commons Select Committee reported that this establishment was "... considered as good as the generalality of Licensed Houses where Paupers are received. . . ." And it was not only pauper lunatics who were ill-used. A contemporary account tells us that George III in his madness was "... encased in a machine which left no liberty of motion ... sometimes chained to a stable ... frequently beaten and starved and at best he was kept in subjection by menacing and violent language."

Such attempts as were made at systematic treatment yielded nothing better than shocking the unfortunate patient by abruptly plunging him into cold water, or weakening him with drastic purgatives, vomits and copious bleedings.

#### Tuke's Retreat

In 1791 a woman called Hannah Mills died in disquieting circumstances at the York Asylum. Her death roused the interest of a thoughtful Quaker called William Tuke, a tea and coffee merchant, to whose family the history of the great Rowntree fortunes can be traced. Tuke persuaded the Society of Friends to open at York "... a retired Habitation with necessary advice, attention, etc., ..." for the insane where "... a milder and more appropriate system than that usually practised might be adopted." This habitation was opened in 1796 under the name of the Retreat—it explains the origin of the old saw which dubs York "the city of lollipops and lunatics."

The methods applied at the Retreat were a tremendous advance for their time. Chains and terrorization

were discarded and replaced by a serene family atmosphere. No one was punished for failing to control his actions; self-control was encouraged by putting him in charge of small animals, such as rabbits or poultry. No effort was spared to make him feel a normal, usefully active person. These methods became famous and Tuke's Retreat prospered. It stands to this day and is still a centre of advanced treatment of the mentally sick.

Many efforts were made during the early 19th Century to reform the laws governing mental institutions, but most came to nothing. In 1816, 1817 and 1819, successive Bills designed to ensure the inspection of private madhouses passed through the Commons but were rejected by the House of Lords. "There could not be," said Lord Chancellor Eldon in 1819, "A more false humanity than an over-humanity with regard to persons afflicted with insanity." Fortunately their Lordships' views were customarily behind the times and in 1828 came the first comprehensive laws on the certification of the insane. Soon afterwards the County Asylums arrived to carry on the work of the pioneer establishments. The most notable of these asylums was at Hanwell, where a thousand patients were accommodated and Tuke's system of the minimum of restraint was extended to the complete absence of mechanical restrictions. Hanwell Asylum is now St. Bernard's Hospital, a puddle-coloured building on the Uxbridge Road, where the red 'buses whizz to and fro, watched by the patients standing on benches behind the high wall.

#### Uncomfortable Fact

Throughout the early 19th Century the movement for lunacy reform gathered strength, culminating in the Lunatics Act of 1845, with which Lord Ashley (later the Earl of Shaftesbury) was closely concerned. This Act brought all types of institution under the supervision of a national inspectorate. The Lunacy Act of 1890 consolidated the 1845 Act; most of its provisions still apply to certified mental patients. The 1914/8 war provided an abundant crop of cases of physical disturbances attributed to mental stress and an opportunity to test the theories of the new schools of psychiatry. The Mental Treatment Act of 1930 allowed the new categories of "voluntary" patients, who could enter and leave a mental hospital at choice and the "temporary" patient who was expected to recover within a few months. The National Health Service Act of 1946 placed the treatment of the mentally disabled on a par with that of the bodily sick.

Yet we are still faced with the uncomfortable fact that mental illness is more common than ever and tends to increase. Improved methods of diagnosis and a generally more enlightened approach could account for part of the increase but still leave a large lump of it unexplained. What are the reasons for the mental and associated illnesses flourishing so unhealthily? Why is it that, as the *Lancet* has remarked rather sadly, having spent so long encouraging the mentally sick to enter hospital there are now nevertheless so many of them that measures must be taken to keep them out or curtail their stay? It is true that mental illness is most frequent in those countries which we are pleased to call the most civilised; for this reason many are content to lay the blame upon modern society. Lord Boyd-Orr has said (*Manchester Guardian*,

23/7/55): "Such simple things as a motor car in a street or a radio, with its exciting news, could give a shock to the nervous system that was unknown 50 years ago. The stress and strain of modern life . . . were causing an increase in disease, particularly of the heart and nervous system."

True as that may be, it is only part of the story, for it takes no account of the real nature of the strenuous problems which goad so many into a nervous breakdown. It is not the radio of itself which worries the nervy, but the fact that it brings the word of war and unhappiness into the home. Among the causes of nervous people we can point to the need to work overtime (often foregoing part of a Summer holiday) to work off a Hire Purchase debt or a mortgage on a house; the press of inadequate housing; the battle of travelling to and from work on overcrowded transport; the high accident rate on congested roads; the after-effects of the war and the threat of its hydrogen-bred successor. None of these are a necessary part of society; they are products of the essentially competitive nature of the modern Capitalist world, with the hurry and worry and scurry of its struggle for survival

at its fiercest in the great sprawling cities.

#### Way Out

What of a way out of our problem? We have come a long way since the days of witchcraft trials and the cruelty and tumult of Bedlam. The force which changed the face of Tuke's England, which built the cities, the railways and the factories—which has suppressed some diseases but has nourished the nervous complaints—has had its part in altering men's ideas on many things, including mental illness. We are now up against the fact that the tensions of modern Capitalism are washing out the efforts of the mental health reformers. The only effective way of dealing with mental illness is to go for its roots—that means the social system which measures human activity not in terms of its usefulness but on whether its results can be sold in a shop or on a market. Until we get rid of that rock-bottom insanity there will always be people who are mentally sick, as testimony to the impossible strain of trying to live like a human being in an inhuman world.

IVAN.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," December, 1905)

#### Carnegie and—Cant?

Mr. Andrew Carnegie, Croesus and library vendor, has recently delivered himself of several lectures upon the horrors of war—Carnegie, the head of the great American Capitalist Corporation which raised an army in opposition to the steel-workers of Pittsburgh struggling to prevent a further hardening of their already hard enough conditions; Carnegie, the head of the mighty firm that conducted a bitter and bloody war to vindicate the right of Capital to wring out of the labour of the workers larger and ever larger profit; Carnegie, the multi-millionaire, every penny of whose stupendous wealth is stained with the blood of his workmen, slaughtered by armed Pinkertons to make Carnegie's holiday and to help build him a reputation of a

great philanthropist—this Carnegie comes to say:—"There still remains the foulest blot that ever disgraced the earth, the killing of civilised men by men like wild beasts as a permissible mode of settling international disputes, although in Rousseau's words, 'War is the foulest fiend ever vomited forth from the mouth of hell'."

So, "the foulest blot," when used to settle international disputes . . . and yet when it occurs at Homestead, the hell that sweats for Mr. Carnegie the millions that Mr. Carnegie's labour never produced, Mr. Carnegie expresses his horror in—loud silence. It is wonderful the great difference a little change in the geographical situation of the seat of war will make.

#### Book Review

### A SLIGHT CASE OF CENSORSHIP

"The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists," by Robert Tressell: Lawrence & Wishart, 30s.

FORTY-FIVE years ago a house-painter named Robert Noonan died in a workhouse hospital in Liverpool. He left an 18-year-old daughter in Hastings, and two years later she sold for £10 the manuscript he had entitled *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists; Being the Story of 12 months in Hell, told by one of the Damned, and written down by Robert Tressell*. It was first published in 1914. Not many people read it in the next four years, while the philanthropists of the world were killing one another, but from its republication in 1918 it has been a continual best-seller.

Until the appearance of Mr. F. C. Ball's *Tressell of Mugsborough* in 1951, little was known about the book or its author. It was plainly a piece of autobiography—most people, in fact, believed that the author had committed suicide, as his hero Owen had done. Least known

of all was the fact that the entire book had never been published. The most widely circulated edition was known to be an abridgement; it was in fact an abridgement of an abridgment, the "complete" edition containing only about two-thirds of the book as Noonan had written it.

The original editor, Jessie Pope, gave no hint of what damage she had done. She wrote merely:

"In reducing a large mass of manuscript to the limitations of book form, it has been my task to cut away superfluous matter and repetition only. The rest remains as it came from the pen of Robert Tressell, house-painter and signwriter, who recorded his criticism of the present scheme of things until, weary of the struggle, he slipped out of it."

A better pointer to why such extensive cuts were made was given by the publisher, Grant Richards, in his *Author-Hunting*. After speaking of the length, he said:



"The book was damnably subversive, but it was extraordinarily real... Did I do harm by spreading such a book broadcast? I do not think so."

The complete book has now been published for the first time. The "superfluous matter and repetition" amounts to eleven chapters and some material from the remainder. One main character was erased altogether—Barrington, the well-to-do sentimental Socialist. Several of the expositions of Socialism, always presented as Owen's "lectures" to his workmates, actually belong to the Barrington episodes. Mr. Ball's guess is that "it wouldn't have done to let it be thought that a gentleman might have wit enough to see through the Capitalist system."

The sub-plot about Easton's wife and the Bible-punching lodger is developed to much greater length: Ruth has a baby, parts from and is reconciled with her husband. The excision of this section is probably, as the Preface suggests, "out of consideration for the prejudices of the time." Its inclusion adds a great deal to the novel. Noonan's sharp eye saw how little chance there was of married happiness in poverty—the fault was not in human beings but in the conditions which made a mockery of human relationships. The episode, like many of the other deleted sections, carries a strong criticism of religion. Noonan was especially bitter about Christianity (though his fore-word specifies "no attack... upon sincere religion"). He describes feelingly the "charitable" organizations and the smug religious humbugs of Mugsborough—more than anything else, his target is the gross, money-grabbing materialism of the Shining Light Chapel, its pastors and its worshippers.

The *Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* is a remarkable book. Its author was not an educated man in the conventional sense: his writing was often crude, his grammar often bad. He was a craftsman, a member of the Social-Democratic Federation, who had read and learned a bit more than most—enough to make him indignant where others were submissive. His story of painters is the story of what he saw, experienced and knew need not happen: the humiliation and degradation of the working class. He chronicles the despair of the man who wants to make the others see it too:

"Oh, damn the cause of poverty!" said one of the new hands. "I've 'ad enough of this bloody row'... This individual had two patches on the seat of his trousers and the bottoms of the legs of that garment were frayed and ragged. He had been out of work for about six weeks previous to this job, and during most of that time he and his family had been existing in a condition of semi-starvation..."

This is more than a picture of conditions half a century ago, however. If it were merely that, it would have been forgotten along with *The Cry of the Children* and *The White Slaves of England*. It is still in a large measure true today. Building workers are better paid and better treated now—mainly because of the unions which Noonan urged his mates to join; they are still poorly paid and without any security of employment. People who discover painters earning £10 a week forget (or don't know) that a painter who gets 50 weeks' work in a year is lucky. Or that the bonuses which bolster a painter's (and many another workman's) pay are only means for him to work himself out of a job the faster. The words of Noonan's sacked workmen can be echoed in a good many places today:

"There it stands!" said Harlow, tragically extending

his arm towards the house. "There it stands! A job that if they'd only 'ave let us do it properly couldn't 'ave been done with the number of 'ands we've 'ad in less than four months! And there it is, finished, messed up, slobbered over and scamped, in nine weeks!" "Yes, and now we can all go to 'ell," said Philpot gloomily."

The scamping of work—the tears trickling down the paintwork "as if the doors were weeping for the degenerate condition of the decorative arts"—the rushing and paint-slinging because "the job's losing money" (the unvarying condition of every building job, according to the boss) are well-known to every workman. If he has never actually worked for firms named Smeariton and Leavit, Makehast and Sloggit, Dauber and Botchit, Rushem and Pushem, he knows them very well; as well as he knows Crass the foreman, and the employer who "saw only that there was a Lot of Work Done, and his soul was filled with rapture as he reflected that the man who accomplished all this was paid only fivepence an hour."

Times may have changed, but not so very much, and what has changed not at all is the exploitation of the working class. That is why no book of its sort has had as much popularity with working men as the *Philanthropists*. It is wrong, however, to suppose that the exploitation has to go on. Jessie Pope altered *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* and made its hero commit suicide—the act of the man without hope. Robert Noonan knew better. His manuscript ends not with suicide but with optimism:

"Mankind, awaking from the long night of bondage and mourning and arising from the dust wherein they had lain prone so long, were at last looking upward to the light... The Golden Light that will be diffused throughout all the happy world from the rays of the risen sun of Socialism."

Noonan had not really learned enough: his Socialism was the hopeful reformism of the Social-Democratic Federation. It would, however—in this writer's view, at any rate—be churlish to make that a major criticism. Here was a man who lived, suffered and was angry; would that there were many, many more.

*The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* has always been worth anybody's money, and in its full version it is even more so. Readers of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* who have noted the price and think it steep will be interested to know that there is a special "Trade Union and Labour Movement" edition in limp cloth for 10s. 6d., for which application may be made to the publishers.

R. COSTER.

### PRICE OF THE "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

As we have already informed readers, the printing and distribution costs of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* have long been such that we have been losing heavily. Most copies are sold from our Head Office at less than 4d. a copy and a considerable number are given away to public libraries and other journals. Since the price was raised to 4d. some years ago costs have risen and further rises are in prospect. Unless we can expand our circulation considerably or receive substantial donations we may reluctantly be compelled to increase the price to 6d.

Answer to Correspondent.—E. Carnell. Reply to letter on "Capitalism and Labour-Saving Machinery" crowded out of this issue. ED. COMM.

## PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

**Ealing Branch.** The first of the Branch's visits to museums during the new winter season took place in October and was most successful. Comrade Coster was in charge of the party, and the museum this time was the Victoria and Albert, South Kensington. The social at a member's home afterwards was the usual convivial affair.

Branch members are reminded of the fortnightly lectures being held up to Xmas, alternating with the usual business meetings.

**The Fulham and Chelsea Branch** report that between the end of April and the beginning of November, 61 outdoor propaganda meetings have been held. This is by far the best propaganda season that the Branch has had since its formation. More than twice as many meetings have been held this year than last.

It is intended to hold meetings at Gloucester Road on Wednesdays and at Earls Court on Fridays during the

winter whenever weather permits.

All enquiries regarding branch business should be addressed to Jon Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

**Glasgow (City and Kelvingrove) Branches** are holding Sunday evening meetings at Central Halls. Details of the next three meetings are shown in this issue. The members are confident that, given support of Branch members and sympathisers, these meetings will prove successful and stimulate interest in the Party's case in Glasgow.

**Manchester Branch** is holding a lecture at Milton Hall, Deansgate, on Friday, 9th December and a good audience is anticipated. Members who cannot get to Branch meetings regularly are asked to make a special note of the date and time and support the meeting.

P. H.

## CHINESE OPERA

IN China, dramatic speech is often in verse and is sung to the accompaniment of an orchestra and so would be labelled as opera here. An entertainment never before seen in the West, the classical opera from Peking, has been on tour in Europe and has recently played to crowded houses at the Palace Theatre, London, and was also televised. People were delighted at the integration of dancing, mime, acrobatics, drama and music. Some of the audience who heard Chinese singing for the first time, may have thought that someone had trodden on the cat's tail, but, in fact, the characteristic wavering wail of their singing is largely due to their music being based on the pentatonic scale.

The programme consisted of excerpts from a number of operas, which in full, usually last for three or four hours, but we must confine ourselves to a description of but two of them.

### San Cha' K'om (where three roads meet)

The folk tale upon which this play is based has been current in China since the 14th century. The Innkeeper, a Robin Hood character, in introducing himself, denounces corrupt officials and scoundrels and thereby captures the sympathy of a Chinese audience right from the start.

The opera showed the famous "fight in the dark" scene, which illusion is conveyed by the actors on a brilliantly lit stage. The movements of the two characters as they creep around trying to find one another and the slashing of swords and the mime when they succeeded in doing so, are closely integrated with the music and must be seen to be believed. Wrong timing would probably result in the actors injuring one another.

### Trouble in Heaven

This is an episode from one of the most famous of Chinese fairy tales. The King of the Monkeys has been appointed Guardian of the Peach Orchard in the Palace of Heaven. Attended by a crowd of his followers, he struts into the orchard to take up his post, but ends by eating the peaches he was supposed to guard.

Next he learns that his name is not included in the list of guests for a banquet and in his anger immediately proceeds uninvited to the banquet hall. Arriving early, he has the place to himself and makes the most of this chance as he jumps on to the table to feast to his heart's content. He gathers up the uneaten viands for his followers and demonstrates that for the Mother of Heaven and her guests he really could not care less—then returns home. The Great Lord of the Universe despatches four Generals with their respective armies, to exact retribution. The Monkeys, unmindful of their own shortcomings, fight back and, believe it or not, succeed in putting the representatives of law and order to flight.

This opera criticises the class basis of society and implies that the way to end it is for the unprivileged to co-operate to remove the masters. The Monkeys represent the unprivileged and the Great Lord of the Universe, the ruling class. The victory of the former over the latter plays its part in making this one of the most popular operas in a nation of opera-goers; nearly every town has an opera house and almost every village is visited by travelling opera companies. That some operas are critical, is one of the reasons why the stage has been frowned upon by the Chinese ruling-class, though there are other factors. For instance, the female parts were played by men as it was not "done" for women to enter this profession, for reasons of modesty. Consequently, homo-sexual practises among stage folk have been accepted practise, to the disgust of the orthodox. Also, the Chinese aristocracy have confined themselves to the classics and have looked down on these plays which are written in the vernacular.

### Development of Chinese Opera

The origin of Chinese opera lies centuries before the present millennium in the rites performed in honour of a deceased ancestor of a family. It was customary for one of the boys in the family to impersonate the deceased and receive the sacrificial offerings on his behalf. The custom arose of celebrating the famous acts of the dead man and



short dramatic scenes were performed on these occasions.

Later, military victories were celebrated by dances accompanied by music and songs and these became a court entertainment.

The rise of the drama properly belongs to the 13th and 14th century, under the Yuan Mongolian dynasty, when these barbaric conquerors re-staffed the Chinese Civil Service with foreigners (of whom Marco Polo was one) and discontinued the classical examinations of the civil service. The educated Chinese thus displaced, were relieved of the necessity to attach themselves to the classics and they began to turn to new forms of literature and so the most intellectual activity of the time became the writing of stage plays in the colloquial language. From a limited court entertainment, the drama swiftly developed into a national art, becoming the chief recreation of the common people of China. It is probably because their opera has kept on that sound level that it is so virile.

#### Opera under the "Communists"

Unlike the Mongol Khans, whose rule over China released the development of the drama, the Chinese Communist Party are well aware of the propaganda value of drama, and are determined to make it serve the ends of the Chinese State Capitalism, for which they are the spokesmen.

The following quotation from *Problems of Art and Literature* by Mao Tse Tung, illustrate this point:

"Will not Marxism-Leninism then destroy the creative spirit? Oh yes, it will. It will destroy the feudal, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois creative spirit; the creative spirit that is rooted in liberalism, individualism, abstractionism; the creative spirit that stands for art-for-art's sake and is aristocratic, defeatist, and pessimistic. It will destroy any brand of creative spirit which is not of the masses and of the proletariat. And is it not right that these brands of creative spirit should be destroyed as far as proletarian writers and artists are concerned? I think so. They should be extirpated to make room for the new."

In other words, if the writers of present day China do not support the present day Republic of China, they will (in the words of Mao) be extirpated, and fear of this fate is enough to make most writers support the Government whatever their personal views.

Again,

"In my opinion, our problem is fundamentally one of

how to align ourselves on the side of the masses. If this problem remains unsolved, or if it is not solved properly, our writers and artists will never fit into their environment or be able to fulfil their tasks competently, for they will encounter innumerable conflicts, inner as well as external."

So writers and artists in China must either follow the party line or suffer conflict. This surely is art in a strait-jacket.

Chinese drama is changing according to the needs of the changing society and it is used to further government policy in a number of ways. For instance, some of the new plays demonstrate the Marriage Laws of 1951. It will be noticed that there was quite a large female cast, in fact, the Lotus Dance, which is a modern number, was performed entirely by female dancers. This change must amaze many Chinese people and is due, of course, to the position of women in Chinese society changing, as their system of society changes into modern Capitalism and releases women to work on a more or less equal basis to men. Other operas support the Government drive against the brothel system of sexual fulfilment. These operas are so well performed that the audiences are visibly affected. Newspapers report that at some performances, the audience, mistaking illusion for reality in the poignancy of the tragedy, tried to rush the stage to lay their hands on the villains of the piece.

Other operas dealt with the prevalence of gangsterism among dock labourers; the need for water conservation schemes; and industrialising the country. In these plays it is the Communist Party that is really the hero of the piece, for the character that represents the hero, is usually a loyal Party Member.

China's Prime Minister, Mr. Chou En-lai revealed (*Daily Worker*, 2/11/55) that the Chinese Classical Theatre, now playing in London, had, during its Paris run, been invited by an American theatrical group to go to the U.S., and the American group was to go to China. But the American group was not allowed to accept the invitation. How closely Chinese opera follows the dictates of government policy! China is intruding more and more into world markets and power politics. It is no accident that after 1,241 years of existence this year the opera from Peking has come to the West.

F. OFFORD.

## THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND SOCIALISM

(Correspondence continued from August and October issues. Our critic's further letter and our reply are printed below.—Ed. Comm.)

Golders Green, N.W.11.  
25/10/55.

In replying to my letter in the October issue, the Ed. Comm. requests me to answer the crucial question: how will the group struggle to which I referred lead to Socialism? You will recall that in my first letter I did say it was a different kind of struggle from the economic class one. This explains my not wishing to choose the word "struggle" when presenting my own view of how Socialism will come. However, I do think it is valid to speak of Socialism coming about through the struggle of competing ideas, in the sense, not only of an "ideas struggle" between people, but also a conflict of ideas in the same person.

The Ed. Comm is wrong in supposing that my criticisms of "Socialism through class struggle" also apply to the group struggle concept I have suggested. The triumphant Socialist attitude does not capture Parliament nor disposes Capitalists—it gets incorporated into new patterns of social behaviour which transform Capitalist functions into Socialist functions. The institutions of political power do not (as the Ed. Comm apparently thinks is my case) change simply because of changing attitudes, but *with* them. If we postulate the growth of the Socialist attitude to mass proportions (that is, of the knowledge, desire and demand for Socialist conditions) we cannot imagine that social institutions will remain substantially as they are today, when Capitalist attitudes predominate. Ways of thinking and ways of acting cannot get so far out of line: a community, for example, which

has abandoned race prejudice does not continue to persecute racial minorities.

Instead of trying to meet my criticism that a Socialist majority cannot use the State to coerce a violent minority, the Ed. Comm accuses me of not wishing to explain "how that same hypothetical possibility would be dealt with on his own proposition." My answer is that I do not accept the hypothesis: it is *your* violent minority, not mine. *You* must try to explain how you can capture control of a coercive institution like the State and then "convert" it into an agent of emancipation. Your difficulty arises from the fact that the violence hypothesis is only a watered-down part of a much more full-blooded theory which the SPGB has now largely ceased to accept. The SOCIALIST STANDARD included the following in its reply to a correspondent in October, 1937:

"Engels wrote as follows:—

"... The working class must first take possession of the organised political power of the State and by its aid crush the resistance of the capitalist class and organise society anew... The state may require very considerable alterations before it can fulfil its new functions."

Now if our correspondent will turn to our "Declaration of Principles" he will find precisely the same idea in par. 6."

Today you can still turn to the D. of P. and read the same words, but you get a different interpretation of them from Party authorities. The old SPGB knew what the State was going to be used for; the present SPGB is not so sure, and its explanations are hedged about by unlikely, but theoretical possibilities, effective deterrents, and forces not having necessarily to be used. It is a good thing that the SPGB has so advanced—but unfortunate that it has not yet advanced further to the position of recasting its principles so that the last vestiges of "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" are removed.

It must not be imagined that the only alternative to capturing the State is to have nothing to do with it. There is a third way—that of finding out what is actually happening to the State in present society. If there are administrative functions that are more clearly Socialist in character then these deserve support in accordance with the element of Socialism they contain. It is particularly to be regretted that Clause 6 of the D. of P. expresses an interest in just those aspects of State activity (the powers of government, and armed forces) that are most typically Capitalist in character.

Yours sincerely,  
S. R. PARKER.

#### REPLY

This is our critic's third letter opposing the SPGB case that it is necessary in order to achieve Socialism for a Socialist working class to gain control of the machinery of government but we are hardly any nearer to learning how our critic thinks Socialism could be achieved without such control. It is evident that he is prepared to go on indefinitely re-iterating his criticisms and introducing side issues but unwilling to state and explain his own case in these columns.

Part of the present letter consists of grossly distorting references to correspondence published in the SOCIALIST STANDARD of October, 1937. That correspondence dealt with a critic who asserted that Marx and Engels held that

it was not necessary to gain control of the State, because the State "was not of the slightest use to the working class." That critic further held that the SPGB envisaged Socialism as a system of society in which "the working class will govern or be governed, as you will, by the political State." In our reply to that critic we showed that Marx and Engels held it to be necessary to gain control of the machinery of government and that they held that with the disappearance of classes there "also disappears the necessity for the power of armed oppression or State power." We then pointed out that Clause 6 of our Declaration of Principles embodies the same idea.

Our present critic, by not stating what that earlier correspondence was about and by selecting an incidental and not otherwise mentioned phrase from the passage quoted from Engels tries to make it appear that the 1937 correspondence was about the suppression of opposition, and on that false basis he is able to discover a new mare's nest about an entirely mythical change in the SPGB's view.

On the question of how an unlikely but "theoretically possible" attempted sabotage by a minority would be dealt with our critic says he does not have to explain how, on his assumptions of a struggle between a Socialist group and a Capitalistic group, such a possibility would be dealt with, because he does not accept the hypothesis. (In his letter in our October issue he had also written that he could not imagine such a situation). It will be seen therefore that all of his criticism concerning that question deals with something that he holds cannot happen.

Whether he is logical in holding that it absolutely could not happen is another matter. It is difficult to square it with his own two propositions that all people "think and act in class terms" and that Socialism will be achieved by a Socialist group struggling with a group consisting of "those who either support or acquiesce in the continuation of Capitalist institutions." (See August issue).

On the issue of what alternative he has to offer to gaining control of the machinery of government he is wordily uncommunicative. We have already dealt with his first putting the conception of a group struggle and then trying to wriggle out of it. (See October issue). And he has himself admitted that his letters are largely only critical of our case and has referred us elsewhere for a statement "of positive views." (See last paragraph of his letter in our October issue).

He wrote there nebulously about "attitudes" and "Capitalist institutions" changing. So we asked him to explain and justify this. We wrote:—

"On the question of institutions of political power changing because of changing 'attitudes,' it would surely be to the point if our critic had produced evidence from history of a new class not needing to gain full or shared control of the machinery of government because of changing 'attitudes,' or if he produced current evidence of such attitudes having changed and having already brought about essential changes in the capitalist institutions of political power."

We asked this but we get no answer, except the quibble about whether our critic holds that the change of institutions is or is not supposed to be caused by the change of attitudes. We say it is a quibble because, as will be seen in his present letter, he still does not say what he holds to be the cause of the change of institutions and does not even now say that they are not caused by changes

Continued on page 185



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

DECEMBER,



1955

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

## THE CIVIL SERVICE ROYAL COMMISSION

Most Post Office workers and other Civil Servants have good reason to take a dim view of the Report of the Civil Service Royal Commission. They should remember that their predecessors had the same feelings about a long line of Royal Commissions and Post Office Committees of Inquiry during the past one hundred years. But if they are disappointed—which would imply that they had expectations—this could only arise from a mistaken opinion about the purpose of such inquiries. Such Royal Commissions are not set up with the purpose of doing good to the Government's employees. If the Government wanted to raise their pay it does not have to ask the permission of its own Royal Commission. At all times every Government, Liberal, Tory, Labour, has automatically rejected every application for higher pay; followed often, but not always, by stiff negotiations or appeal to arbitration, resulting in some concession smaller than that claimed. The Government naturally behaves just like any other employer. Only the mentally befogged among the workers in private employment can suppose that their problems would be solved if they could become Government employees.

Indeed in some respects My Lords of the Treasury, behind which facade the Government issues its instructions, can be more mean and stiff-necked than most company boards of directors.

Capitalism needs a big army of post office workers and other civil servants to carry on its communication services and administration, an army that has grown many times larger and more expensive since the overhaul of the Civil Service in 1854. As it grows in size and cost it becomes increasingly important to the Government in its task of keeping Capitalism functioning that the service should be efficient and should be able to attract workers of the kind required without a bigger outlay than is necessary. The cost of all this falls on the propertied class and they are fully alive to the fact that a cheap and efficient service is very important to them.

So much for Royal Commissions on the Civil Services, but the present report has an interest from another point of view. For historical reasons the Civil Service grew up with a non-contributory pension scheme and annual leave and sick pay schemes more liberal than anything in outside industry, though of course these factors operated to induce the civil servant to accept lower pay than he might have got elsewhere—security of employment and a pension on retirement balanced this. The Labour Party in its early days considered that with extended Nationalisation other workers brought under the Government would get the same security of employment, non-contributory pensions and holidays and sick pay conditions. Instead, the Labour Party, when it carried out nationalisation schemes, decided not to make the coal miners, railway workers, etc., into civil servants, thus avoiding giving them civil service conditions of employment. At the same time the Labour Government of 1947, when it introduced the National Insurance scheme, whittled away civil service pensions by making civil servants contribute for old age National Insurance pensions but without the right to draw the pension in addition to their civil service pension. (This applies to staff entering after 1948.) That Government also decided to deduct from civil service sick pay the sick benefit they receive in return for their contributions. Now the Royal Commission carries the whittling away process further by recommending shorter holidays.

Another Labour Party notion held since the last war is that the old inequalities of pre-war Capitalism were disappearing and that Capitalism (which they called Socialism) was becoming or had in fact largely become, equalitarian. The Report of the Civil Service Commission shows the absurdity of this. During the war (as during the first world war), with the rising cost of living there was a general tendency for the wages of lower-paid workers to keep more or less in line but for better paid workers to fall far behind. This happened in industry and in the Civil Service. Later on as war conditions passed the old pattern re-asserted itself: The Royal Commission has taken due note of this and has made its recommendations for higher pay on the clear pattern that the higher the rank the larger the increase. So the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury according to the Commission should have his £5,000 raised to £7,000, an increase of £2,000. Below him other high ranks are to get their increases of £1,500, £1,000, £625, £400, right down to that bottom where no increases at all are recommended or where an increase of a few shillings in weekly pay is linked with loss of overtime pay; in fact many will be actually worse off. In doing this the Commission recog-

nised that the Government had to bring its top rank civil servants into line with the large salaries of top-ranking business executives and the members of the Nationalised boards.

Thus departs the Labour Party dream of greater equality. There were, of course, Labour and Trade union members of the Commission who may have felt uneasy about this but they, along with the rest of the Commission, duly accepted the facts of Capitalist life.

Among them is Mrs. Wootton, who in recent years has written extensively about the equalitarian idea.

They referred to this question in their Report, in a section endorsed by all the members, in which acceptance of the Capitalist pattern of inequality is explained and excused by saying that it is a political question. The following is an extract from paragraph 99:—

"Wage and salary negotiations today are conducted in a social framework which, at least by implication, recognises and accepts the existence of variations in standards of living according to position in the social hierarchy. Proposed changes in this structure, that is to say narrowing or widen-

## THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND SOCIALISM—

continued from page 182

of attitudes. Instead, he merely says that they are not "simply" caused in that way; thus leaving his position still carefully concealed.

The nearest he gets to an example of how he thinks attitudes change and the institutions of political power change with them, is the statement that "a community, for example, which has abandoned race prejudice does not continue to persecute racial minorities."

If this is supposed to be a description of something that has happened in some country or other (typically he does not risk naming it) it shows a complete failure to understand the nature of so-called "race prejudice." There are no countries in which the Government or people, without economic motivation, proclaimed a belief in race prejudice and then abandoned it. In the real world of Capitalism economic and strategic conflicts exist between classes and national Capitalist groups and express themselves among other ways in the form of hostility to people of different nationality, different religion, different colour, etc. This will continue as long as Capitalism. At the present time it is growing more widespread and more virulent. The whole of the Mediterranean is aflame with such conflicts taking on national and racial form, Moors and French, Cypriots and British, Arabs, Israelis. Turks and Greeks, Egyptians and Sudanese. It looms large in the relationship of the strongly Nationalist Asian Powers

ing of variations in living standards, must raise social and, as we think in the last analysis, political considerations. The question of salary 'differentials,' so very much before the public eye, is an example, since it is directly bound up with the pattern of income distribution, which is essentially a political question. We are satisfied that it is right and proper, and it is implicit in the principle of fair comparison, that civil service pay structure should reflect such changes as take place in the outside world. If, however, changes were proposed in the Civil Service with the intention of giving a lead in such matters to the country as a whole in order to further a political or social objective, civil service pay negotiations would become involved with political issues and the non-political character of the Service might well be impaired. For the Service to give a lead to the outside world would be incompatible with the principle of fair comparison, and we therefore believe that for this reason also the principle is a vital and effective safeguard of a non-political Civil Service."

Here once more we see what is the outcome of the activities of Labour Party reformists. They have to choose between being "practical"—which means trying to make Capitalism function smoothly—and sticking to some social reform impossible to apply to the Capitalist system.

and is growing from end to end of Africa. As a by-product of these basically Capitalistic economic conflicts the legal freedom of individuals to express what views they like, to travel abroad, to work in and settle in other countries, to marry foreigners, etc., is more restricted than for long past.

The next decline of trade and growth of unemployment will make it worse in Britain and other countries.

In our critic's last paragraph he again refers in the vaguest possible terms to an alleged third way, neither capturing the State machinery nor having nothing to do with it; the way "of finding out what is actually happening to the State in present society." He adds: "If there are administrative functions that are more clearly Socialist in character then these deserve support in accordance with the element of Socialism they contain."

This, of course, is where we come in. Our critic puts forward a theory that seeks to explain the evolution of society without new classes in the past having had to gain control of the machinery of government, and postulates the existing Capitalist institutions of political power changing along with "attitudes." We do indeed want to learn from him (to quote his words above) what he thinks "is actually happening to the State in present society," but this he will not tell us, as witness his refusal to deal with the questions we put at the end of our reply in the October issue and that we have repeated in this reply.

ED. COMM.

## OIL—THE PRIZE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

THESE are two delusions that cloud the minds and paralyse the hands of those who mistakenly believe that Capitalism is evolving into Socialism. One is that the so-called Welfare State has changed the old order at home. The second is that World Capitalism has been humanised into giving up the naked struggle for raw materials, strategic bases and markets. This is supposed to have been brought about by the United Nations organisation. A glance at the Middle East should help to blow away this dangerous self-deception.

Fahoud is the name of the spot in the Arabian desert

that is the centre of the drama being played out with repercussions throughout the Eastern Mediterranean lands, and Fahoud spells oil. Mr. Noel Barber, correspondent of the *Daily Mail* told the story in the issues of 31 October and 7 November.

"A year ago no white man had ever been there. Today, under the lee of a great escarpment—with the nearest natural water-hole more than 100 miles away—there lies a small cluster of huts and tents, and by the side an airstrip. It is Fahoud, a name you can find on no map. In it live a sturdy band of lonely men, Britain's advance force in the war for oil that daily gathers momentum in the Middle East. . . . Fahoud pinpoints the struggle for oil being fought by vast



concerns in Wall Street and the City, by diplomats in Geneva, and in clashes between troops patrolling the tenuous desert boundaries. It is the battle between the Saudis and the British, between America and Britain for mastery in the world's richest oilfield." — (*Daily Mail*, 7/11/55).

As Noel Barber says of his report: "It is a story that might have been written 60 years ago, when 'outposts of Empire' were fashionable."

He points out that British and American interests clash. American oil companies are closely connected with the ownership and development of the concession oil fields in Saudi Arabia, while British companies, and the British Government, are associated with the Aden Protectorate, the Sultan of Muscat and the Sheikh Abu Dhabi, "lifelong friend of Britain." Three years ago Saudi Arabia sent in troops to occupy the Buraimi Oasis, hitherto occupied by the Sultan of Muscat and Sheikh Abu Dhabi. After attempts to settle the dispute by arbitration had broken down, Sir Anthony Eden announced in the House of Commons on 26 October that "native troops, commanded by British officers, had reoccupied the Buraimi Oasis after a skirmish with Saudi Arabian forces who marched in three years ago." (*Daily Mail*, 31/10/55).

The vital importance of the oasis is that it commands Fahoud, centre of the new oil fields.

"For if the Saudis had established themselves in Buraimi they would certainly have controlled a much larger share of the Oman Desert and the eastern end of the Empty

Quarter. That would have meant the end of Fahoud for us." — (*Daily Mail*, 7/11/55).

Here are some of Noel Barber's observations, written after his visit to Fahoud and neighbouring areas.

"Every move in the tangled drama of the Middle East has its roots in oil. An American geologist is discovered with Saudi troops pottering about in the Aden Protectorate. The British move into the Buraimi Oasis. The Saudis sign up with Egypt. The Czechs supply the Arabs with arms—all are linked with the measureless wealth lying in the black lakes below this inhospitable terrain." — (*Daily Mail*, 7/11/55).

And he notes that the new, rich oil fields meant not just large quantities of oil, but more profit for the British companies.

"Now the battle for oil takes a new turn—the struggle for oil showing a larger profit. This is the natural reaction since the oil royalties in Arabia were stepped up to 50 per cent. In this new war British interests hold the whip hand. Any oil found from, say, Buraimi down to Aden will yield a far richer profit than oil pumped out of the hinterland. That is the real reason for Britain's tougher attitude. For sending 1,000 crack troops to Aden, for appointing Air Vice-Marshal Lawrence Sinclair to command the R.A.F. at Aden." — (*Daily Mail*, 7/11/55).

Of the occupation of Buraimi the *Mail* wrote:—

"The incident was small in itself, but it can be taken as an earnest of Britain's determination to protect her oil interests at all costs." — (*Daily Mail*, 31/10/55).

Thus speaks unregenerate Capitalism; and the workers of all countries who may be called upon to pay the cost with their lives should draw the right conclusion while there is yet time.

H.

## THE BENEFITS OF FULL EMPLOYMENT

Britain in 1955

"What is this life? if full of care we have no time to stand and stare." — (W. H. Davies.)

The following is from the *News of the World*, (6/11/55).

### LATCH-KEY CHILDREN

"Many mothers in the old days used to get up before the family were awake and go off charing to help pay the rent. Nowadays they go off to work with the family after breakfast and bring home a pay-packet at the end of the week.

It should all be stopped, says a magistrate. A law should be made, he thinks, preventing industrialists employing mothers of schoolchildren. And in support of his contention he describes what he calls the latch-key children of to-day.

'They go to school,' he says, 'wearing latch-keys round their necks. When they arrive home in the evening they have to let themselves in. Mothers who go to work and are not home in time to greet their children are a major cause of juvenile crime.'

Maybe there's a lot of truth in this, but we can't agree with the idea of yet another ban on people doing what they please. Many mothers go off to work not—as the magistrate seems to think—to buy a TV set, but simply because there's not enough in a single wage packet to make both ends meet.

The strange thing is that in this co-called Welfare State, which is supposed to provide so much for the family, about 3,000,000 married women go out to work. That's about one-seventh of the total labour force and

an all-time record except for the war years.

On the one hand industry offers work to almost any mother seeking it, and would be quite unable to carry on in the present labour shortage without the services of its army of women; on the other hand welfare workers and magistrates proclaim that mothers at work are a major cause of juvenile crime.

You can't have it both ways, and it's clear that even if the factories and the farmers could do without them, hundreds of thousands of women are not going to pack up their jobs over-night to seek married bliss by the kitchen sink.

The phenomenon of mothers at work has come to stay. But the problems it involves—particularly the effect on children—must not be ignored. Mothers and industry alike must face up to the responsibilities."

These statements are further confirmed by this one from *Reynolds News* of the same date.

### THE 'WEEK-ENDS-ONLY' MOTHERS

Infants 'from six months upwards' are collected from their homes at 6 a.m. in specially designed and disinfected vans so that their mothers can go to work in the mills, a Yorkshire rector said yesterday.

The Rev. Raymond Hatch, rector of St. Peter's Church, Warmsworth, near Doncaster, said in his parish magazine that the vans took the children to creches 'where they spend the entire day from Monday to Friday every week under the eye of efficient nurses.'

Mr. Hatch added: 'The contact of these children with their mothers is confined to Saturdays and Sundays.' Like most things in Capitalism, what is hailed as

a great blessing and boon frequently turns out, after practical experience, to be the reverse.

Now, the Editor of the newspaper with the largest circulation in the world, has publicly stated that 3,000,000 married women go out to work because their husband's pay packet is not sufficient to live on. This is the explanation behind the great wave of industrial disputes and ceaseless wage claims. But what becomes of the proud boasts of politicians and industrialists that Britain is enjoying the greatest prosperity of her history in which British workers are sharing? The facts quoted above reveal the truth. Industrialists and shareholders may be (in fact, are) reaping a golden harvest.

Prosperity of British industry never has, and never can, mean a solution of the workers' problem. Paradoxically enough, the more trade, the more work, and in the end net result, the less gain. Overtime working according to official figures has made the 48-hour week a thing of the past. And yet, in spite of his longer hours and £9 or £10 a week, the poor old donkey finds the carrot farther away than ever. The reason for this is the rise in the price of the necessities the worker requires to keep going.

A moment's thought will show that a situation of "Full Employment" in an exporting country like Great Britain, must create a rising market for those goods which workers consume.

Unfortunately, most workers to-day are so busy working still harder to try to crack Capitalism on their own, that they haven't a moment to spare to think about the way it works. They are not keenly interested in Socialism, because being ignorant of the laws of the Capitalist system, they think the solution to their problem is to work harder and do still more overtime, if possible.

They sincerely believe, in their lack of knowledge, that they are working for themselves, and not the employer. Many of them, at present, in their frenzy, are working for the undertaker. They cannot appreciate that Capitalism works for the Capitalists. This is something the social-reformer cannot understand.

What are wages anyway? Simply the amount of money which will procure enough supplies to keep the worker at it.

Should a fortunate situation arise where there is demand for his products, the Capitalist will increase production. He will avoid increasing wages, as far as possible, since this, in the long run, cuts profits. It may well be advisable to grant certain increases to avoid expensive

stoppages, but, generally, his interest is to buy as cheaply as possible.

Should there be a very large labour demand the employer will call up the industrial reserve army, in the first instance, those who previously were not allowed in the door, the married women.

Not understanding the economics of Capitalism, many husbands (and wives) labour under the delusion that when a wife goes out to work they are doubling the family income.

In point of fact the husband is losing the services he requires, and which his children need to maintain health and comfort.

Thus we now have the paradoxical situation (according to the General Electrical Co. of America) where a third of the wives who work come home "completely exhausted" from their efforts to earn enough money to pay the instalments on the "labour-saving" devices, which they buy to enable them to go to work.

What is actually happening is in times of boom the Capitalist grinds up workers quickly, while the going is good.

The working wife comes home frayed out—to start another full-time job at home, with disastrous results. It is like those cases one reads where a man has undertaken to do two jobs, one on days, the other at nights, ending in mental or physical collapse.

It was pointed out by Marx years ago that in such cases the Capitalist is getting two workers for the previous price of one. The wage which originally maintained a family is now insufficient and has to be augmented.

It may well be that the few extra pounds a week obtained at such a fatal cost are sometimes partly expended on some little extra "luxury." Two or three trips to the pictures weekly, ten shillings a week for a television set or a second hand motor-bike, can not really recompense the mental and physical exhaustion the mental compensate the mental and physical exhaustion which prolonged overwork produces. The gnawing discontent and dissatisfaction of those in "Full Employment" is an inescapable and prominent feature of our modern days.

The worker will solve nothing by sending his wife to work for another exploiter, one is enough for any family to carry.

Not "work harder" but "think harder" will do him more good.

HORATIO.

## LABOUR PARTY HYPOCRISY OVER RISING PRICES

THE Labour Party spokesmen keep up the pretence of being indignant about the rising cost of living under the Tories. When they were in office themselves and put up the cost of living they excused it with the same arguments as are now used by the Tories.

One of the possibilities of government financial policy now being hinted at by the newspaper City Editors is a further devaluation of the pound. If it happens the Labour Party will be worried about what line to take. They would like to condemn it on the ground that it will

lead to a still higher cost of living, but this would lay them open to the Tory retort that they devalued in 1949, which put up the cost of living as they expected it would.

The story of the 1949 devaluation is an interesting one. The Chancellor of the Exchequer at that time, the late Sir Stafford Cripps, had declared forthrightly a dozen times that he did not intend to devalue the pound; and suddenly, in October, 1949, he did devalue it, from 4 dollars to 2.8 dollars. As far as Cripps was concerned his denials were probably genuine, but, faced with the failure of



British exports to expand, particularly in the American and Canadian markets, he felt eventually that it was the only expedient open to him.

Unfortunately for the Labour Party his denials were taken at their face value and just before devaluation took place Labour Party headquarters in their journal "Fact" (Edited by the Labour Party Research Department—August 1949 issue) published an article explaining why Cripps would not devalue.

The article explained that while devaluation would push up exports because Americans and Canadians could then buy pounds more cheaply, it would at the same time necessarily raise the price of imports and consequently raise the cost of living in this country.

The writer took as his example Canadian wheat, which at that time cost \$2, or 10/-, a bushel.

"If the pound were devalued to three dollars, a bushel of wheat would cost 13s. 4d. and up would go the price of bread. A similar rise would be unavoidable in the price of every commodity in which raw materials imported from outside the sterling area are a part of the cost."

He quite clearly understood what the issue was, that of lowering the workers' standard of living, which can always happen in one of two ways, either by lowering wages and leaving prices unchanged, or by raising prices and letting wages lag behind.

The writer went on as follows about the effect of devaluation:—

"The pound would buy less in Tooting and Bradford, as well as in New York and Winnipeg. Devaluation is therefore an alternative to wage-slashing as a device for cutting our prices at the expense of the mass of the people."

## CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

**A**N article written by Cassandra dealing with child cruelty was published in the *Daily Mirror* (11/8/55). The gist of the article was that there are brutal people in society who ill-treat their children and that they get off too lightly in court for the crimes they have committed. As he puts it: "What is the price of pain? What is the tariff of punishment for depraved and vicious parents who fall upon their children with clenched fists, with clubs, with red hot irons and boiling steam? I will tell you, it is dirt cheap, there are cut price bargains in brutality." He also points out that crimes against property, particularly forgery, are punishable by much more severe sentences.

In some respects, one can agree with Cassandra. It is a terrible thing to think of defenceless children being tortured by mentally depraved adults; it is almost on a par with dropping A-bombs on defenceless people as in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Where we would disagree with him is the implied idea of increasing or even imposing any sentences in such cases. Obviously mentally afflicted people should be cared for sympathetically, not incarcerated in prisons, where, if anything, they become further depraved.

What Cassandra forgets is, that children like most things in society are property, and as such the owners (parents) can, to a certain extent, do what they like with them (outside of compulsory schooling, conscription, etc.).

This candid admission would of course never have been published by the Labour Party Headquarters if they had known that two months later Sir Stafford Cripps was going to devalue, and when devaluation did take place "Fact" naturally did not repeat its explanation of the purpose behind devaluation.

The Tories also ignored the point because they were all in favour of devaluation.

The Communists attacked it, but with their tongues in their cheeks, for the Russian Government two years earlier had put through a currency wangle of their own, though superficially it was of a quite different kind. They did not devalue the Rouble but raised its value, which had the opposite effect, that of lowering the cost of living. But while the Communists here were making the most of the lowering of certain controlled prices in Russia, they were less expansive about the method by which it was done, that of taking away from the workers part of their money and savings. On the appointed day for the currency revaluation all existing Rouble notes were declared invalid. The old notes had to be handed in and for every 100 of the old notes the holder received only 10 of the new notes in exchange. Savings bank deposits and Savings Bonds were likewise cut, though less drastically and at varying rates according to the amount held. Above a certain level most Savings Bonds (whose security was backed by Government guarantee) were cut to one-third of the nominal value. Wage rates, however, were not altered, so that after the initial confiscation wages did buy more of the articles whose prices were reduced.

The "great money trick" can indeed be worked in a variety of ways—but the workers always lose.

H.

as long as they do not mar their potential abilities as wage-slaves.

In this society based on the exploitation of wage-labour, where coercion, punishment and authoritarianism enforced by the State with its coercive apparatus the Army, Navy, Air Force, Police Force, are the methods used to uphold the system of organised robbery of the working-class; who alone produce society's wealth and run the system from top to bottom in the interest of the Capitalist class; one should not be surprised at people who become mentally depraved by the repressive conditions under which they live. What we should be surprised at is the fewness of such people in society. When one thinks of the upbringing of most workers; the authoritarian background; the parents; the school-teachers, most of them disciplinarians; with their ideas of punishment, revenge, retribution and all that goes with it. The accent in society on the coercive, destructive aspects, the guns, daggers, bows and arrows, etc., of childhood with their implied ideas of violence. The later ideas of semi-military organisations, boy-scouts, boys-brigade, youth-movements, and the final rounding off that most people get in the armed forces, where they really develop the ideas of violence, hate, revenge, etc., and are trained in the noble art of mass-murder, all in the name of private-property, civilisation, and all that is holy to ruling classes throughout the world. These efforts of course being generally streamlined and coordinated by the outpourings of the Press, Pulpit, Radio,

Television and Cinema. It really is surprising that there are so few people who go off the rails. True some do and it is a deplorable fact, that punishment will not stop it. It is the property relationships of this society which cause not only child-cruelty, but also war, poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, racism, and a whole host of social ills which spring only too readily to mind.

When Cassandra contrasts the sentences of forgers, etc., against the sentences of child-torturers, he should remember that the crimes of the former group are against capitalism's property relationships. As he puts it, "This is a crime against the most material side of society," and is generally speaking all that the law is interested. It doesn't matter much what one does with one's property (including children) as long as one does not harm society as a whole. The peculiar thing in this society is that if you butcher a lot of people on the battlefield, or obliterate a city and thousands of its population by dropping an

A-bomb, you are acclaimed a national hero, but take these bestial ideas back into your civilian life (as some occasionally do), beat, rob, rape, kill and in some instances torture your children, and you are considered (rightly) to be coarse, callous, brutal, bestial and, to say the least, depraved.

The truth of it is, that in defence of capitalist property anything goes; right becomes wrong; good becomes bad; truth becomes lies; and conversely. This is true of any ruling group whether American, British or Russian. Only under the international system of Socialism where property—that is the relationship that people have about the things of life—of owner as opposed to non-owner—is abolished, and where people hold in common (like the air they breathe) the means of living, where all people are social equals and have freedom of access to the wealth of society, can such things be abolished.

JON KEYS.

## THE A.B.C. OF ANARCHISM

### What is Anarchism?

**A**narchists say that is the negation of governmental authority and State interference in the life of the individual and of the community as a whole. Anarchists claim that anarchism is a condition of society where all live "in freedom"—a "free" society. As we shall see later this "free" society envisaged by anarchists can mean almost anything.

To the anarchist the cause of most of the evils that beset us today is the existence of government and a coercive state apparatus. The anarchist does not seem to see the State as part of a private property society; as something that has come into existence with the emergence of private property relationships; as an (undesirable and coercive) effect of present-day society.

The State and Government are THE CAUSE of all our troubles, they say.

Many, but not all anarchists hold that forms of parental, educational and religious authority cause or contribute to the problems of general—and particularly sexual—neurosis. Most, but not all anarchists oppose all forms of external authority—although there are a number of Catholic anarchists in America, and possibly elsewhere, who accept the authority of Rome.

### Many kinds of Anarchists

Although most anarchists envisage and desire a future state of society which they call Anarchism (from the Greek word *Anarkia*, "a condition of being without government") there are many schools of anarchist thought—almost as many as there are anarchists.

Some anarchists are Pacifists, whilst others are advocates or defenders of various kinds of violence. Thus, Alexander Berkman in his *A.B.C. of Anarchism* (first published in America as *What Is Communist Anarchism?*):—

"Yes, Anarchists have thrown bombs and have resorted to violence . . . under certain conditions a man may have to resort to violence." (p. 11).

In all fairness to the anarchists, bomb-throwing is now no longer popular among anarchists—particularly the British ones.

Many anarchists combine anarchism with syndicalism—the theory of the General Strike and industrial action as a revolutionary method. They are known as anarcho-syndicalists. Whilst followers of Peter Kropotkin—the "Anarchist Prince" (there are no anarchist princes in this country, only Knights!)—and later Alexander Berkman, both Russians, are usually known as "Communist-anarchists" as they also advocate the common or collective ownership of the land and the means and factors of production. Their method of achieving their object is usually through the general strike. It is syndicalist in method, and Communist in objective.

The anarcho-syndicalists advocate the workers' control of the factories and workshops in which they work, i.e. the coalmines would be controlled and run, and owned, by the coalminers, the railways by the railwaymen, etc.

As stated above, there are very many kinds and varieties of anarchists and anarchism. Not all anarchists are Communists or Syndicalists. Some are Individualists, other Mutualists. Even today Max Stirner has his advocates, and Proudhon is not yet forgotten.

Whilst Communist-anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists advocate the general strike, or the overthrow or smashing-up of the State, the Individualists and Mutualists do not believe in revolution. They think that our present society will gradually develop into anarchy—almost like the Fabians! The Individualists also uphold the right of the individual to own private property. They advocate "free" competition—truly an utopian bourgeois concept!

### Practice what they Preach?

Although all anarchists claim to be opposed to government, the use of the ballot, and the so-called Western and Eastern ways of life, this does not prevent them, when they think fit, supporting these governments, institutions, or "ways of life."

For example, the well-known Belgian anarchist, G. Ernest, writing in *Freedom* (1/3/52), said:—

"The rearmament of Western Europe is necessary, and victory of the West in case of war is desirable; let us be frankly and sincerely with Truman." Or more important, the support that the anarchists gave



to the Russian Revolution and the Bolsheviks.

From the beginning the Socialist Party said that the Russian Revolution was a "bourgeois" revolution; that it would not and could not emancipate the workers and peasants of Russia from poverty and exploitation; but that it would result in a new class society—a society of new rulers and oppressors. But not the anarchists.

Most of the anarchists *all over the world* supported both the February and October "revolutions" of 1917.

Nowadays, like the followers of the late Leon Trotsky, they say that the revolution was "betrayed"; it failed Alexander Berkman, in his *A.B.C. of Anarchism* supported both the 1917 revolutions but admitted that "the masses lacked both consciousness and definite purpose"! But the following admission of Emma Goldman, another well-known Russian anarchist, should damn the anarchists for all time. In "Trotsky Protests Too Much" (published in Glasgow by the "Anarchist-Communist Federation") she wrote:—

"During the four years' civil war in Russia the Anarchists almost to a man stood by the Bolsheviks, though they grew more daily conscious of the impending collapse of the Revolution. They felt in duty bound to keep silent and to avoid everything that would bring aid and comfort to the enemies of the Revolution." (p. 15).

When it suits them anarchists will support any movement or form of government, democratic or totalitarian.

But it was not only during the first few years of the Communist Government in Soviet Russia that some of the anarchists supported its leaders. Writing in 1938, during the Spanish Civil War, Felix Morrow in his book, "Revolution and Counter-revolution in Spain," shows us how low anarchists can sink:—

"Currying favour with Stalin, the Anarchist leaders had been guilty of such statements as that of Montseny: 'Lenin was not the true builder of Russia, but rather Stalin, with his practical realism.' The Anarchist press had preserved a dead silence about the Moscow trials and purges, publishing only the official news reports. The C.N.T. (Anarchist 'trade unions') leaders even ceased to defend their Anarchist comrades in Russia when the Anarchist, Erich Muehsen, was murdered by Hitler, and his wife sought refuge in the Soviet Union, only to be imprisoned shortly after her arrival. The C.N.T. leadership stifled the protest movement in the C.N.T. ranks. Even when the Red generals were shot, the C.N.T. organs published only the official bulletins." (pp. 127-8).

At this time prominent anarchist leaders in Spain were helping the Republican Government in its war with Franco and the German and Italian Interventionists. Anarchist leaders, like Montseny, were either—or had recently been—members of the Central Madrid or Catalan Governments. And the Government had, for some time past, been receiving war supplies from the Soviet Government.

## CRIME ON THE INSTALMENT PLAN

### "Crime on the Instalment Plan"

"Charged at Haverfordwest magistrates' court on Friday with non-payment of a £5 fine and £4 costs and compensation, imposed by Mathry magistrates, 60-year-old Arthur William Walkeley told the court that his wife, whom he had not seen for 20 years, was in America with his son, who was a major in the U.S. army.

"Superintendent P. Teague said Walkeley had since been fined £6 at Tenby. He was due to appear at Pembroke Dock court on Tuesday.

"Walkeley, who said he was getting a job in which he

### Anarchists in Spain

Ever since the days of Bakounine and the break-up of the first Working Men's International, the anarchists have been most numerous in Spain—probably the most backward nation in Europe; which, perhaps, explains why the anarchists are so strong there.

The majority of anarchists in Spain were also members of the C.N.T. (*Confederación Nacional de Trabajo*—the National Confederation of Labour). Its leaders were also often prominent members of the F.A.I. (*Federación Anarquista Iberia*—the Anarchist Federation of Iberia).

According to Felix Morrow the C.N.T. leadership was sympathetic to the Russian Revolution, and in fact sent a delegate to the Comintern Congress in 1921. Although supposedly opposed to politics and political parties, Spanish anarchism had, in the F.A.I., a highly centralised Party apparatus, through which it could maintain control of the C.N.T.

In the February, 1936, election in Spain the anarchists, who had in the past, abstained (anarchists are supposed to be opposed to any form of voting) voted for the Popular Front. The "left" parties increased their vote by about a million over the 1933 election. D. A. Santillan admits that this can, to a great extent, be put down to the anarchist vote. Santillan was a leading member of the F.A.I., organiser of the anti-Fascist militias in Catalonia, and later an anarchist minister in the Catalan Government. In his book, "Porque Perdimos la Guerra," he says:—

"We gave power to the Left parties, convinced that in the circumstances they represented a lesser evil."

We seem to have heard this "lesser evil" argument before somewhere!

Afterwards anarchists entered both the Madrid and Catalan Governments. On November 4th, 1936, four members of the C.N.T. entered the Caballero Government.

Supposed opponents of war, government, the ballot box and "democracy," the anarchists in Spain—and elsewhere—have supported all these things.

They are neither consistent nor logical. They are both opportunist and utopian.

In Britain, unlike Spain and elsewhere, they are of little consequence, but their views are similar. Their groups afford a welcome to frustrated "intellectuals" who are tired of government interference and State authority; the continual docketing, the red-tape, and conscription, that is part of our lives under present-day Capitalism.

Unlike the Socialist the anarchists do not have a definite set of principles—in fact they are governed by expediency—or a practical objective—Socialism.

PETER E. NEWELL.

would pick up £10 to £15 a week, was ordered to pay the £9 by weekly instalments of £1. In default, he will go to prison for a month."—(*South Wales Evening Post*, 15/10/55.)

So there you are even the law is doing it now; you can have a car, television, house, radio, furniture, clothes, holidays, yes; and now you can even pay your fines on "easy terms." Who knows if the system gets any crazier, we may even have the "magistrates' courts" vying with each other to gain popularity. One can envisage future police court notices reading something

like this: "If you cannot mend your ways, stop here and pay the easy way."

There is one cheering thought, however, school teachers of the future "Socialist Society" (provided man survives to see it) will never be lost for material to make the kids laugh. The pages of any "Capitalist daily" are chock full of crazy happenings that would make a cat laugh if it wasn't so busily concerned with the serious business of staying alive in this "madhouse" society called the "Capitalist system."

P. MELLOR.

### MANCHESTER BRANCH LECTURE

Friday, 9th December at 7.30 p.m.

at the

MILTON HALL, DEANSGATE, MANCHESTER.

"Present-Day Trends—Political and Economic"—

W. ATKINSON

### PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS

"THE HARCOURT ARMS,"

32, HARCOURT STREET, W.1.

(Off Marylebone Road, near Edgware Road Station)

Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

### SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.

Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee at the Head Office or to a local branch.



### OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

#### SUNDAYS

Hyde Park	...	3 p.m. and 4.30 p.m.
East Street	...	
(Walworth)	...	Dec. 4th 11 a.m.
	...	" 11th 12.30 p.m.
	...	" 18th 11 a.m.
	...	" 25th 12.30 p.m.
Finsbury Park	...	11.30 a.m.
Whitestone Pond	...	
(Hampstead)	...	11.30 a.m.

#### WEDNESDAYS

Gloucester Road Station ... 8 p.m.

#### FRIDAYS

Earls Court Station ... 8 p.m.

#### SATURDAYS

Katherine Street, Croydon ... 4 p.m.

#### LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Lincoln's Inn Fields, Tuesdays and Fridays at 1 p.m.  
Tower Hill ... Thursdays at 1 p.m.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT** The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

### GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

### SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at

THE FORUM CLUB, 32, PERCY STREET (TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD), W.1.

at 7.30 p.m.

- Dec. 4th Peace and Peace Memorials—E. Kersley.  
" 11th The Cost of Living Question—E. Handy.  
" 18th The Fabians, Bernstein and the Revisionists —Gilmac.



## DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

**BRISTOL**—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

**DUNDEE GROUP**—Group meets alternate Wednesdays, 14th and 28th Dec., 7.30 p.m., York Room, Green's Playhouse.

**EDINBURGH**. Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 36, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh.

**OLDHAM**—Group meets Wednesdays Dec., 7th and 21st 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

**RUGBY**—Group meets alternate Mondays 5th and 19th Dec., at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

## HACKNEY BRANCH LECTURE

at the

CO-OP HALL, 197, MARE STREET, E.8.

on Monday, 5th December, at 8 p.m.

"Socialists and the Call-up," H. Baldwin.

A programme of Documentary Films will be shown at  
52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET  
at 7.30 p.m.

(Entrance at rear, Edgeley Lane)  
(Between Clapham North and Clapham Common  
Tube Stations)

December 4th: "The Peoples' Charter"—  
HELEN ROSE

The growth of the United Nations Organisation from the Atlantic Charter to the first session of the General Assembly in January 1946, where representatives of the U.S.A., United Kingdom, U.S.S.R., France, India and Norway are seen speaking.

December 11th: "Pop Goes the Weasel"—  
R. AMBRIDGE

A simple explanation, as given by a park-keeper to a man sitting on a park-bench, of how the money raised by taxation is divided out among the various services which the Government provides.

December 18th: "World of Plenty"—H. JARVIS  
A film about food, how it is grown and harvested, marketed and eaten. The facts and arguments are presented by means of pictures, maps and diagrams, commentary and interviews.

January 1st: "The World is Rich" E. LAKE  
This film is a successor to World of Plenty and deals with the post-war food situation.

Refreshments available after Meeting.

## CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

at

HEAD OFFICE

Saturday, 17th December

7.30 p.m.

A Party News Reel will be shown  
during the Evening

## BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

**BIRMINGHAM** meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

**BLOOMSBURY**. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. (1st, 15th and 29th Dec.)

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT**. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

**CAMBERWELL** meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

**CROYDON** meets Wednesday, 14th and 28th Dec., 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

**DARTFORD** meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

**EALING** meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

**ECCLES** meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

**FULHAM AND CHELSEA**. Correspondence and enquiries to Jon Keys, 6, Koppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3. Outdoor meetings, Gloucester Road, Wednesday evenings, 8 p.m. and Earls Court, Friday evenings, 8 p.m.

**GLASGOW (City)** Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

**GLASGOW (Kelvingrove)** meets alternate Mondays, 5th and 19th Dec., at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to I. MacDougall, 26, Arnprior Quadrant, Castlemilk, S.5.

**HACKNEY** meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

**HAMPSTEAD** Enquiries to A. D. Oliver, 13, Penywern Road, Earls Court, S.W.3. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. (7th and 21st December) at 127 Constantine Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.

**ISLINGTON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. Secretary: 54, Ashdale House, Seven Sisters Road, N.4.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES** Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

**LEWISHAM** meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

**LEYTON** Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, D. Russell, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

**MANCHESTER** Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 13th and 27th Dec., George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

**NOTTINGHAM** meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

**PADDINGTON** meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. "The Harcourt Arms," 32, Harcourt Street, W.1. (off Marylebone Road, near Edgware Road Station). Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

**PALMERS GREEN** Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

**S.W. LONDON** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o Head Office.

**SOUTHEND** meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

**SWANSEA** Communications to Secretary, Dick Jacobs, c/o 13, Waterloo Place Brynmill, Swansea, Glamorgan.

**TOTTENHAM** meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

**WEST HAM** meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

**WICKFORD** meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

**WOOLWICH** meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.) Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

GLASGOW (CITY AND KELVINGROVE) BRANCHES  
SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at

CENTRAL HALLS, BATH STREET, GLASGOW

7.30 p.m.

Dec. 4th The Russian Revolution, A. Shaw.

" 11th Trade Unionism, C. McEwen.

" 18th Working Class Progress, T. Mulheron.

Jan. 8th Bullets v. Ballots, R. Reid.